

Swamp's Status Quo Spending

The U.S. national debt recently surpassed \$34 trillion. \$34,000,000,000,000! To put this astronomical figure in perspective, that's about \$100,000 per American. Additionally, \$34 trillion is approximately the value of China, Germany, Japan, India, and the United Kingdom's economies combined.

Undoubtedly, the greatest threat to America's future is our soaring national debt, which continues to climb higher by the second. In fact, this sum swells at such an alarming rate that the U.S. accumulated more than \$2 trillion in just the last seven months.

Folks, this is simply unsustainable. To save our nation, economy, and future generations from financial failure, Washington must stop spending borrowed money. Yet politicians in both parties are perfectly content with maintaining the status quo.

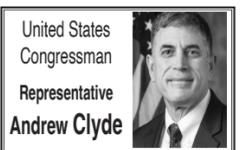
As you know, part of government funding is set to expire on Friday, January 19th — placing Congress in the midst of another funding fight. Lawmakers are considering both topline spending for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) and legislation to avert a government shutdown.

Unfortunately, neither issue is being managed in a conservative, fiscally responsible manner.

The sham bipartisan spending deal increases government spending by roughly \$82 billion over the combined total of House Republicans' proposed appropriations bills for FY24. In total, FY24 spending by government agencies, known as programmatic spending, is more than \$68 billion higher than the already high statutory cap set last year by the "Fiscal Responsibility Act." Plus, since Republican leadership abandoned critical leverage during negotiations, there are zero conservative policy wins in this deal.

As for avoiding a government shutdown, congressional leaders are pushing another short-term spending bill, known as a continuing resolution (CR), to simply kick the can of government funding down the road. Despite already pushing funding deadlines for FY24 spending bills twice, leaders are gearing up to pass yet another CR to extend current funding to early March. I strongly oppose this "clean" CR that merely pushes our responsibility to fund the government back a few weeks, as this simply buys Speak-

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Andrew Clyde

Embracing Piracy

Ron Hamilton was living the dream. After college, he married his sweetheart and began his career in the music industry. Then came the crisis. At age 28, Hamilton's doctors discovered cancer in his eye. He had to lose that eye to save his life.

How would you handle a crisis so severe? You might find the answer by looking to your past to see how you survived previous difficulties, and what you can learn from them. Some people not only survive but thrive as they tread beyond the slough of despond. It is a profound spiritual journey to embrace meaning in tragedy. That can be your journey.

The Bible portrays such a response in Joseph. He was thrown into a cistern then sold into slavery by his brothers. His captors trafficked him to Egypt where he was imprisoned on a false accusation. A friendly fellow prisoner failed to keep his promise to appeal to Pharaoh on Joseph's behalf. Joseph finally found the favor of Pharaoh by interpreting a dream. After Joseph rescued the country from famine, he told his brothers, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive" (Gen. 50:20). He had embraced his circumstances and trusted God to walk him through his valley of humiliation.

Apostle Paul summarized his crisis in Asia. "We were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life." But in it he found meaning. It was "so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead" (2 Cor. 1:8-9). He also had a physical ailment, his "thorn in the flesh." Even in that, he boasted about his weaknesses. "My grace is sufficient for you," the Lord said to him, "for power is perfected in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). The most basic component of a resilient life is to trust God, who has a timeless perspective. He sees your weakness and raises you with His grace. He is the Shepherd and Guardian of your soul (1 Pet. 2:25).

Ron Hamilton lived a resilient life despite his loss. When his eye patch prompted playful children to call him a pirate, he embraced piracy. He became "Patch the Pirate," and wrote songs and audio stories to engage and instruct children. He served the discerning as well. His song "Rejoice in the Lord" puts his own loss in perspective. "I could not see through the shadows ahead; so I looked at the cross of my Savior instead. I bowed to the will of the Master that day; then peace came and tears fled away."

Hamilton lived the dream until his days as "Patch" were done. In 2023, he left the land of the dying for the land of the living. He was 72.



Wayne Fowler

Commissioner's Questions

Q. We have seen some really cold weather recently. Can you tell us how much it costs the county to keep the roads clear during snow/ice events?

A. The extra cost to the county, while still an impact, is mostly within our budgeted amounts. When a snow/ice event lasts 3-5 days, costs can be upward of \$30,000. This includes salt, gravel and overtime costs. This does not include our normal labor costs or equipment time and repair costs.

Q. How many miles of road does the Road Dept. typically scrape and apply salt and gravel to?

A. The Union County Road Dept only treats county-maintained roads. The GDOT works the state roads. On average, the Union County Road Dept addresses more than 500 miles of road when it comes to ice and snow. Furthermore, when these events last for multiple days, the Road Dept often has to scrape and gravel some roads several times. The City of Blairsville also does a very good job on maintaining the city streets. The county and state crews do a heck of a job, and we appreciate that so many of you have recognized this. Just last week, someone stopped one of the trucks to thank them for the work they were doing. The mention meant so much to the men who were working out in the freezing temperatures.

Q. How many snowplows does the county utilize?

A. Soon after I took office in 2001, it was obvious that during a serious snow, we did not have adequate equipment to deal with the situation. Over the first two years, we began purchasing additional equipment so that not only could we maintain the main county roads but could also scrape and salt many of the smaller county roads. Now, during a regular snow event, we have 2 large spreader trucks with plows, 5 smaller 1-ton trucks with salt spreader boxes and plows, and 3 F250 trucks with blades and salt boxes. There are usually two Rd. Dept. employees per truck. The City of Blairsville has one truck with a snowplow and salt spreader box. GDOT usually has two trucks and sometimes three, so we have about 10 or 11 vehicles working in our county. There is no other rural county in Georgia that has this much equipment. In the event that we have a large snow (over 4"), we also have

See Paris, page 7A



Lamar Paris

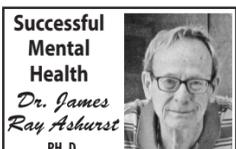
Loneliness III

The loneliness can indeed lead to health issues. It can lead to anxiety and towards a high level of depression. The lonely individual lives in a situation in which difficult choices must be made regarding one's health. When a mixture of anxiety, depression and isolation are combined into daily life, the world of the individual can be confusing and heart-breaking.

Loneliness is not a solitary circumstance. There is the potential of loneliness developing additional devastating ailments. The unfavorable outcomes from loneliness can become quite overwhelming to the lonely person. Some of the outcomes, besides depression and anxiety, are heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, an increase in stress, sleep ailments, and even a weakened immune system.

Loneliness is correlated with an increased risk of strokes and suicidal thoughts. The loneliness impacts the ability of the individual to value oneself because of the possible attached depression.

See Ashurst, page 7A



Dr. James Ray Ashurst



Chamber of Commerce

I would like to thank all those that were able to attend our Annual Banquet held at Young Harris College this year. What a great night of looking back on 2023 and looking forward to what's next in 2024. This was an opportunity to thank our many Chamber Champions, that by working with the Chamber, we were able to help promote local businesses as they continued to grow and thrive. We took an opportunity to thank our many Ambassadors that help us as we work with our almost 800 members. Makayla Fairless, our youngest Ambassador, was named as Ambassador of the Year for her tireless support of our community. Selecting this year's Business of the Year was an almost impossible task, as we had to select from our four Businesses of the Quarter: River City Bank, Season's Inn, Mountain Life Team and Alexander's Store. All of these organizations went above and beyond to help make our community a great place. But we had to select just one, so this year's Business of the Year is Alexander's Store, celebrating 70 years.

See Chamber, page 7A



Steve Rowe

Letters to the Editor

Re: "New Year, Same Border Crisis"

Dear Editor, Rep. Clyde should spend more time working for his constituents than weaving fairytales in hopes of securing votes. He is a very solid cog in the current do-nothing Congress.

The last 10 Congresses have averaged 391 bills signed into law — not just passed — per term. Clyde and his do-nothing clown caucus have passed (not signed into law) 27 bills during all of 2023. This is the least amount of bills passed since the Great Depression.

In his most recent whine, Clyde brings up the border crisis. Living in Arizona before moving here, I lived it also. What none of these "representatives" (term used loosely) wish to tell the public, probably because none of them know much about our history, is this border crisis has existed since the 1950s.

In the late '60s and '70s, Mexico routinely See Adams, page 7A

Refreshing

Dear Editor, I was at Walmart on Thursday, Jan. 11, when this great kid approached me. He was a young lad of about 9 or 10 years walking aside of this mom and their cart, and he noticed my homemade walking cane in my electric cart basket. The etching on the cane indicated God, Country and my branch of military service.

He very politely asked me if I had served in the military. I replied yes, and this young lad stood at attention, saluted me and thanked me for my service. I thanked him and asked if he was going to serve when the time came. He responded, at attention again, and reported, yes sir, I will serve my country for freedom. This young lad's mother was watching, and you could see the pride she had in her son. The parents of this

See Lee, page 7A

Meth and Fentanyl

Dear Editor, Methamphetamine is a potent stimulant that has the potential to cause delusions, hallucinations, and paranoia. Meth causes people to stay up late, which leads to this negative behavior. Some people might believe that methamphetamine overdose is practically unheard of. The problem is that although methamphetamine overdoses are uncommon, they have recently peaked.

Heroin and cocaine are the most typical ingredients in speedballs. Numerous people have died as a result of speedballing, including Chris Farley, River Phoenix and John Belushi. See Long, page 7A

Letters to the Editor

Save Money, Live Better

Dear Editor, Are you aware of the new opportunities for saving money and energy? Local, state and federal funding initiatives are now available that can help save money for everyone, particularly lower- and middle-income families. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) passed in 2022 (and modified for 2023) offers rebates and tax credits for a wide variety of programs from home improvements to new or used electric vehicles (EVs).

One such program is the residential Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit for upgraded appliances, insulation, rewiring, energy audits, and more that can help households save money on energy bills while also reducing indoor and outdoor air pollution. These credits are for 30% of the expenses in the year of installation and are retroactive to all of 2022. Beginning in 2023, there is no lifetime dollar limit on the amount of credit See Miller, page 7A

Not Our Home

Dear Editor, We can all scream and shout and groan over what is happening in our beloved nation until the cows come home, but the reality for all Christians who bear the Name of Jesus Christ on their lips is this old sinful place is not our home. We are just passing through to the other side of glory called heaven. I know a lot of folks don't think it is fair what God has allowed in our nation, but let's get real, it is the culture and society that needs to get right with God, before He will bless our nation.

When any nation leaves God out of the equation and chooses evil over good, they are headed for a great awakening, which leads to mass destruction and total separation from a God of Holy Love.

Even our government has joined Satan and his demons when they allow evil to reign over good. When they allow laws to be put on the books that are against God's commands, it's like shaking their fist at God while allowing evil to run rampant just so certain people or groups get their own way, then everybody will be happy, right? Wrong! God is not pleased at what is going on in our nation when our government no longer sees the words In God We Trust, but instead trust in their own agenda that leaves God out of the picture totally, like stepping all over the Ten Commandments with defiance and hatred.

This is why we who love our Lord God can say with satisfaction, praise God this is not our permanent residence, for Jesus Christ didn't come and die for mankind's sin so we could re- See Combs, page 7A

A Proposal of Marriage

As you may know, Dad served as a Church Pastor from the 1970s into the early 2000s in Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama. Under his ministry, murderers, drug dealers, drunks, thieves and other nefarious types of people were converted from lives of crime to followers of Jesus Christ. After all of us kids grew up and moved away, my Mother began working in a nursing home close to their church in Pikeville, Tennessee. Mom's work at this and other nursing homes over the years opened Dad's eyes to other needs (sometimes ignored needs) in the community.

Dad began to realize that some people in nursing homes and retirement centers are sometimes ignored because their loved ones are extremely busy or sometimes there are disputes between the elderly and their relatives which lead to divisions in families. And sometimes nursing home residents are simply the last of their families. The more my Father and Mother were around these residents, the more they realized their loneliness. So instead of just going to pick up my Mom after work, he soon found himself arriving at the Home early enough to visit with people and talk with them.

There was one lady he visited with that intrigued him. She was only about 5 feet tall. She enjoyed talking, doing crossword puzzles, eating cake, getting her hair done, and she was a huge Braves Fan. She never missed a game. If the game was televised, she was watching, and if not, she listened to it on the WDEF out of Chattanooga.

Mom worked at this nursing home for five years and could never remember when this lady had a visitor. She found out that the lady's family (her only son) lived in California, and the lady herself wasn't from Pikeville. The lady had lived close to Chattanooga, and after her husband died, she realized her needs required more than she could do for herself. She soon admitted herself into the first available nursing home she could find, and that was where she was now located. This lady did have money enough to be called wealthy, and she had her wits about her. A beautician came to the nursing home each week, and this lady never failed in getting her nails done and her "hair fixed" as she put it. The little lady always looked like a million dollars! Each and every Sunday she came to services at the Nursing Home to hear Dad's sermon. She loved Dad dearly and always looked forward to his visits because, as he put it, "I like to make over her." He knew that her relatives were far away and she was very lonely. See Cummings, page 7A



Mickey Cummings

Radon Awareness

January is national radon action month. Many Georgians spend these cold months huddled inside waiting for a warmer spring. This makes it even more important that we test our homes for radon, a colorless, odorless gas that is the second leading cause of lung cancer.

In Union county, about 46% of homes have elevated levels of the naturally radioactive gas radon. In Towns County, it is 36%. Over the course of many years, exposure to this gas can cause lung cancer even in non-smokers. In fact, radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Smokers, current and former, exposed to radon gas have an even greater risk of developing lung cancer.

Radon is a naturally occurring gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in soil and rock. Often granite rock naturally has high levels of uranium, which is part of why radon is such a persistent problem in Georgia, the gas seeps out of the soil and up through crawlspaces, foundations, and basements into a home. About 800 Georgians die annually from radon induced lung cancer.

Fortunately, testing for radon gas is simple and inexpensive. You hang a short-term radon test in the lowest living level of your home for three to seven days, and then mail it to the laboratory for analysis. In a few days, you will receive the test results. If the radon level in your home is high (4 picocuries per liter or above), you can have a certified radon mitigation professional install a radon reduction system that will reduce the indoor radon level. The system most frequently used is a vent pipe system and fan that pulls radon from beneath the house and vents it to the outside.

A radon test kit can be obtained from the UGA Radon Program (radon.uga.edu) or many hardware stores. You can also purchase a radon test kit at the Union or Towns county Extension office for \$16. Testing for radon is very easy and effective, and I recommend it to anyone that has purchased a home or is living in a home that has not been tested.

Radon may also be found in drinking water. This is primarily a concern with private well water. In Georgia, wells drilled into granitic crystalline rock aquifers, usually in the northern part of the state, are at risk of naturally occurring radon contamination. This is where the uranium that decays to radon can be found at higher levels. To learn more about radon in water in your county visit https://aesl.ces.uga.edu/water/map/. If you are interested in radon in water, test kit contact your County Extension Office.

Radon is a real concern for where we live. Thankfully, more and more people have become aware of the problem that it presents. Mitigating radon in home that has finished construction can be expensive. If you are in the process of building a home consider installing a mitigation system, as it is cheaper to have the system installed before a See Williams, page 7A



Jacob Williams

North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

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Publication No: 001505

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several privately owned motor graders in the county that have agreed to help when we call. The hospital also has available supplemental equipment from private contractors.

**Q. How do you decide what roads to treat during a snow event?**

A. We try to scrape/salt all main roads first. We then go to the secondary roads, and actually do not apply salt on roads that are paved with tar and gravel (surface treatment). The salt will eat the tar out of the road with time and ruin the pavement. However, we do apply sand and gravel to those roads. After they get everything around town, the smaller trucks go out to each of the precincts and the 2 big trucks handle the larger roads like Blue Ridge Hwy., Loving Road, Pat Colwell, Town Creek School Rd, etc.

**Clyde... continued from Page 6A**

er Johnson and Senate Leader Schumer more time to iron out spending bills to match their out-of-control spending levels. At minimum, House Republicans must use this opportunity to force the Senate to consider single-subject spending bills that the House already passed last year, as well as H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act, to address the ongoing invasion at our southern border.

Bottom line, you and your family didn't send me to Congress to rubberstamp the

**Ashurst... continued from Page 6A**

sion, plus even the problem of connecting with others in society.

While not everyone suffering from loneliness is depressed, it presents itself as a terrible risk. Loneliness can be intense and painful. It can be aggravated by pre-existing conditions, such as depression and anxiety. Loneliness and depression can well feed off and even perpetuate each other. In addition, loneliness has a negative impact on learning and memory with a disruption of sleep patterns. Therefore, loneli-

**Miller... continued from Page 6A**

you can take. Another program, the Residential Clean Energy Credit, includes credits for solar panels, solar water heaters, geothermal heat pumps, and (beginning in 2023) battery storage technology.

Important for our north Georgia economy, the home and commercial energy programs offer outstanding opportunities to develop and expand local businesses that provide plumbing, electrical, HVAC, solar panels, and installation services. There are even provisions that help support the labor market and encourage training and apprenticeship programs to ensure more trained workers.

The IRA also provides a tax credit of up to \$7,500 for many EVs assembled in America. Electric bicycles and motorcycles are also eligible for tax credits. As of 2024, this Clean Vehicle Tax Credit may be used at the point of sale, reducing the price paid upfront. Contrary to what some have claimed, energy efficient EVs and plug-in hybrids do not necessarily cost more than other new cars. A new Chevy Bolt EV with a range of about 250 miles starts at \$19,000 after the \$7,500 tax credit. Even used EVs have a tax credit of \$4,000. Future savings include spending significantly less on maintenance because of the simplicity of electric motors compared with internal combustion engines and not having to buy gas. Other benefits include cleaner air because of no tailpipe pollutants, performance benefits, and reduced energy dependence on fossil fuels that can fluctuate widely in price because of situations throughout the world, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine. For more detailed information about EVs, see <https://fuelconomy.gov/feg/evtech.shtml>.

With TVA providing 80% of the project cost,

**Adams... continued from Page 6A**

emptied their jails and bussed inmates to our border, where they were released. Nobody did a damn thing. Why? Because the pro-business factions of both the Republican Party and Democratic Party wanted cheap labor for businesses to whom they sold themselves. Yet suddenly, in the past three years, it's Biden's fault? That's laughable to anyone who knows our history and our laws.

So here we are today, and Senate Republicans, Democrats – everyone EXCEPT Clyde and his contingent of “I refuse to do my job” Freedumb Caucus – have come up with a border bill for the first time in decades, and who wants to block it? Rep. Clyde! Why does he and these few clown caucus members, including MTG, want to block the bill? Personal gain. Retention of power. Social media attention. They want to block it

**Q. When you say you use a salt mixture what is this exactly?**

A. You are right; it is not pure salt but a mixture of salt and what we call 89 gravel (small diameter, size of pea gravel). For instance, during a one-day event, we can use approximately 60 tons of salt mixture for a total material cost of \$4084. Again, a special thanks should go out to our Road Department, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and to the City of Blairsville, all who coordinate and work together to make sure the public has as safe of road conditions as possible. We also hope that for the winter we are in the clear and can begin the process of prioritizing our paving projects for the spring and summer – but we never know for sure.

Swamp's status quo spending.

Given our dire economic outlook, Washington must drastically reverse course by passing a balanced budget, cutting wasteful spending, and practicing financial discipline. Please know that as the funding battle continues, I remain strongly opposed to any “solution” that fails to prioritize fiscal responsibility or secure the southern border, and I will continue fighting with my conservative colleagues to get our nation's fiscal house in order.

ness has a cluster of physical and mental health risks.

While a person can't simply die from feeling too lonely, a person's chronic loneliness can play a role in increasing the risk of dying, such as with the thoughts of suicide. It is vital that such lonely persons maintain proper health and well-being.

*There is nothing outside of yourself.  
Look within. Everything you want is there.  
-Rumi*

BRMEMC has already installed two fast chargers in downtown Blairsville as part of the regional Fast Charge Network covering major corridors across TVA's seven-state service area. According to General Manager Allan Glidewell, “We moved quickly to participate in the Fast Charge Network because we want to make it easy for people to choose EVs so our community can enjoy the environmental and economic benefits of electric transportation.”

The sweeping legislation of the Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act includes much more than cost savings for everyday Americans and an improved climate for our community and the world. Good-paying clean energy jobs and economic development in clean industries, particularly in rural areas, will be created; there are credits for farmers and small businesses; and by addressing the climate crisis that affects us all, cleaner air will help mitigate the health effects of pollution and a warming climate.

A very simple online calculator for determining your potential savings under these programs is available at <https://www.rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator>. To help you claim your credits and rebates, you can receive free tax preparation services from the UGA Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, <https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/vita>.

The new technologies of the clean energy economy have matured and are expanding at a rapid pace. Take advantage of these opportunities and save money! Additional information may be obtained from the Southface Energy Institute (<https://www.southface.org/>) and the North Georgia Conservation Coalition (<https://www.ngacc.org/>).

**Martha Miller**

because it would make Democrats look good, and they have said this publicly. They put themselves over the country, which is no longer surprising. It's just now more blatant and in the open. Republicans like Clyde have NOTHING to run on, because, as Chip Roy (R-TX) stated, they have DONE NOTHING.

It's time to elect people who: 1) want to work, and 2) want to do the job they were elected to do. Reps. Clyde, MTG, and other members of their clown show do not represent anyone but themselves. Don't know about you people, but I'm not happy there are elected representatives in Congress pulling in a quarter of a million dollars per year from my taxes for their annual salaries while doing absolutely NOTHING.  
**JD Adams**

**Cummings... continued from Page 6A**

Dad tried to visit the lady at 3:30 p.m. a couple of times per week. And he made sure to visit her every Friday because Fridays were her day for a hair and nail appointment with her beautician. And she always liked to show off her new hairdo for my Dad. There were a couple of visits that he vividly remembers. The first was on a Friday very close to July Fourth. Dad walked into the common area where the TV was located, and there was this wonderful little lady. Her nails were a bright and shiny red and her hair looked like something an actress in Hollywood would be wearing. He told the lady she looked extraordinarily elegant. He said she was beaming with pride at his compliments.

He sat next to her while they watched Greg Maddux work his magic pitches against their foes the LA Dodgers. The lady began talking about her life before the nursing home. She told him about her husband who was an engineer by trade. She told him of their elegant life when they had entertained their friends and the traveling to far off places like California, Europe and Mexico. She talked about her son who had moved to California and opened up a law practice. During this point in the conversation, my Father detected a note of sadness in

**Combs... continued from Page 6A**

main here for eternity. Perish the thought! But give thanks to God for giving us an eternal home in heaven with Him, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit when this life is over. Do you have that blessed assurance? If not, you can. Just come as you are and accept God's gift of salvation. You will never regret making the best decision of your life.

**Frank F. Combs**

**Long... continued from Page 6A**

It still applies even though Farley died from morphine and cocaine while Belushi and Phoenix died from heroin and cocaine. However, fentanyl has made it much deadlier recently. The increase in overdoses is caused by the addition of fentanyl to drugs.

Up to 50 times as potent as heroin and 100 times as potent as morphine, respectively, is fentanyl. Users are not even aware of what they are taking due to the extreme potency of fentanyl and the fact that it is added secretly to stimulants. They are unsure of why using makes them feel different.

An intense rush occurs when an opioid and a stimulant are combined. To “counteract” each drug's negative side effects, they use speedballs. Meth can make a person anxious, agitated, and paranoid, whereas fentanyl can make a person feel sleepy and have trouble staying awake. These two cancel each other out when they are combined. However, there is a higher risk when using two different drugs.

To learn what to look for, visit: <https://www.narcononnewliferetreat.org/blog/meth-and-fentanyl-the-new-speedball.html>.

Narconon can help you take steps to overcome addiction in your family. Call today for free screenings or referrals. 1-800-431-1754.

**David Long, Narconon**

**Lee... continued from Page 6A**

little man have without a doubt taught him values, history and respect for his country and community. They also are to be commended very highly.

Another time about a month ago, I was in the check-out line, and a very beautiful young lady of color had noticed my cane, reached in my basket and put my product on the conveyor belt and paid for my groceries. I was so surprised that I was speechless, and I am not a person of few words. I did respond with many thank yous and that I will pray for her. I won't mention her name, but her initials were “J.D.”

These two people will be in my memories, and I'm thankful for being in their sight. I feel the young man will be a strong leader of the Lord and Country, and the two will remain in my heart forever. It is said the USA is divided; I do not agree. What I do believe is that there are many in power and many show-offs that are in a place they should not be. Time will handle that, of that I am sure. The USA is a great, god-loving, people-caring nation. Do we need improving? Sure, always. But improve what works and not what does not work.  
**Gary Lee, USN**

had plans for the residents. They were going to have a big celebration.

The little, petite lady took the photograph to her room. She pulled a card from her desk and wrote the following, “Dear Son, I have met the nicest young man and have fallen in love with him. We are to be married here on July 4th.” Linda signed her name to the card and inserted the photograph of her and my Dad. She then mailed it to her son the lawyer in California.

The following Friday Dad had volunteered to help out at the celebration at the Nursing Home. While there, at the celebration, Mrs. Linda's son walked into the event to find his surprised mother. They were hugging and crying as Dad went over to introduce himself. As Dad was introduced as the pastor at Cool Springs Baptist Church and my Mom as his wife, the look on this fellow's face was priceless. He looked down at his mother's smiling face and soon realized he had been played. He was not angry with his Mom or my Dad. He must have realized her loneliness, because he soon moved her to California where she could enjoy the company of her family.

**Chamber... continued from Page 6A**

of service to Union County and the surrounding area.

A special thanks to our Past Board Chairman, Chris Collin, and Board Member Colton Payne, for their years of service. It's because of our Board Members' guidance and oversight we are able to continue promoting Blairsville-Union County's culture and heritage.

Don't miss out on the Evening With The STARS event scheduled for February 8th at the Community Center. If you have not signed up, you can call the Chamber at 706-745-5789 or register on our website at [blairsvillega.com](http://blairsvillega.com). We will be celebrating incredible students, teachers and alumni for their dedication and hard work, demonstrating that Union County Schools thrive to achieve “Success for All!”

It takes everyone to make Life Better in Blairsville.

**Williams... continued from Page 6A**

house is completed. If you have questions about radon, you can contact your County Extension Office or email me at [Jacob.williams@uga.edu](mailto:Jacob.williams@uga.edu).