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pets and owners who utilize the Dog Park. There are two fenced in areas, one for large dogs and one for small dogs, where the dogs can be unleashed but still under the owners supervision. It is hard to predict how dogs will interact with one another, so it is better to be safe than sorry and keep your dog on a leash. Also, remember to clean up after your pet by using the bags that are provided at the entrance to the walking trail.

Q. Back several months ago someone accused you of stating that Union County had a very low property tax rate but according to some listing they produced, we really were not that low. Do you know what that is about?

A. Union County Government has one of the very lowest property tax rates in the State of Georgia. Actually we are 3rd lowest out of 159 counties and if you combine the school and county tax rates together, we are ranked second. Often people are confused about property taxes. However, no matter what anyone says, the simplest way to calculate property taxes is to use the property value times the mil rate. So you can assume that if your home was valued at \$200,000 net, or any other number, you simply compare that value with all other county millage rates in the state.

Q. What are some of

the other counties that we could compare property tax values to?

A. At a net value of property or home of \$100,000, in Union you pay \$589, in Pickens you pay \$722, in Gilmer you pay \$822, in Banks you pay \$898, in Rabun you pay \$929, in Gwinnett you pay \$1088, in Lumpkin you pay \$1087, in Fulton you pay \$1205, in Paulding you pay \$1258, in Stephens you pay \$1366, in Clayton you pay \$1986. Remember, this is county property taxes only and does not include school taxes.

Q. Are there other factors that impact property taxes?

A. Yes there are many. Union County has more miles of county roads than many counties and that obviously cost more. Union County also has over 50% of our county owned by the government, and none of that property can be taxed. Some counties have different services that are costly. In Union County, we have a budget of nearly \$1 million dollars for our paid fire department while most rural counties do not even have a paid full time fire department. So when you look at all factors, it is obvious that Union County government does in fact have a very low property tax rate and there are very few methods used that could show otherwise.

Cummings ... continued from Page 4A

missioner Glenn Gooch and School Superintendent Earl Odom. These two men were very helpful and great in my opinion. The first two farmers I met after being hired were Bill Meeks and Robert Harkins. Both were cattle producers and very involved with our Cattleman's Association. Dan Brown served Georgia as a Livestock Specialist and was a person I could call on anytime for help with production meetings and questions about Beef Cattle. Allyson McGraw was my co-worker and our Home Economist. She and I spent many days at 4-H Camp together. Our staff in the Union County Office Staff consisted of Pat Parker, Judy Carpenter, Allyson and I. Pat introduced me to many local people and she knew more about ornamental plants than most horticulturists. And Judy was our secretary and kept us all on task.

I also must thank people like Bobby Lance, Bluford Dyer, F. Lee Knight, Freddie Collins, Wallace Shelton, Buster Busby and Clarence Tritt from over in Suches. All of these folks have worked closely with me in conducting farm demonstrations and I really appreciate their help. There are a host of 4-H Mem-

bers that showed livestock, judged livestock and competed on our shotgun teams that I was able to work with, so, I want to thank them and their parents for the time we spent together.

I also need to thank Timothy Jennings and Jamie Murphy for their help and allowing me the flexibility to work in the Extension Office while trying to manage the Farmers Market/Canning Plant. Finally, I need to thank Lamar Paris for his support and innovative thinking. Without his efforts there would be no Farmers Market/Canning Plant.

I am no longer your County Agent. But, I will continue as the Manager at the Farmers Market/Canning Plant. So, remember we open the Farmers Market on Tuesdays at 2 p.m. and close at 6 p.m. The auction at the Farmers Market on Tuesdays will now begin at 6 p.m. It is just too hot to begin earlier. The Canning Plant will be open next Thursday at 6 a.m. and we will be open on both Tuesday and Thursday beginning on July 7th. So, we will have something going on at the Farmers Market on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday of each week. So, come out and see us at the Farmers market.

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just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.”

If you believe as Humpty does, then the meaning of a display of a Confederate Battle flag (or for that matter, any flag) depends on the intent of the one who displays it, and it might be a vitriolic symbol of hatred and racism or a proud symbol of history and culture, or anything in between. If you don't believe as Humpty does, and you hold that meaning depends on the displayer's and the viewer's knowledge of vexillology, the context of the exhibit, any pre-existing knowledge about those involved (such as the intent of the displayer, and the predisposition of the observer), as well as the manner, place, time of the display, and differences between what the displayer implies and what the viewer infers, etc., the display might be considered a vitriolic symbol of hatred and racism or a proud symbol of history and culture, or anything in between. So there you have it. In

any case it is merely a symbol, not the thing itself: A swastika never killed anyone, but more than a million men, women and children lost their lives at Auschwitz. Or, as Henry David Thoreau said (in a different context but it fits here too) “There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root.” “The Confederate battle flag is certainly not a “root.” In fact, it is not even a “branch.” At best, it might be a leaf. I doubt if the South Carolina Governor is a Board Certified Master Arborist, but she ought to know the difference between a root, a branch, and a leaf.

Cordially,
Chuck Esposito

Golnitz correction

Susan Jarocki is a Helper in the Community Garden who I wished to thank but inadvertently omitted in previous Letter to the Editor.
Darrell Golnitz

Leone... continued from Page 4A

this patriotic holiday. For forty years the famous Macy's fireworks display held over the East River in New York City has been televised nationwide on NBC. What's more all-American than the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest that has been held in Coney Island for four decades? The Boston Pops has performed their amazing concerts, with the patriotic promenade echoing with the fireworks skyrocketing over the Potomac river for 40 consecutive 4ths. And for 230 years, since 1785, the Bristol Fourth of July Parade in Bristol, RI is the oldest continuous Independence Day celebration in the United States.

I love a small town parade. There is something very special about seeing your community, the High School band, the boy/girl scouts, the veterans, the floats, the classic cars, the decorated horse and horsemen and the thirty different sizes of American flags pass by that make the day. In Blairsville, we have several parades throughout the year, but on the fourth, we have a celebration around our Lake Nottely with the Boat parade that takes place at 11 a.m. starting at Lake Nottely Marina. At 9:30

Fowler ...

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man history to the purpose he intends, and was Washington's oft-used name for God. He and his fellow statesmen believed that God's hand was guiding their struggle for independence and freedom. Some pivotal events of the Revolutionary War were so improbable that it's no wonder Washington favored this name.

Should not a nation founded with such ideas of God be guided by them as well? Does not the yearning for freedom still drive Americans to resist tyranny from without (murderous terrorists) and from within (misappropriated taxes, burdensome regulations, legalized immorality)? Should not our Constitution be used to preserve religious freedom rather than restrict it?

Though Washington did not sign the Declaration, he does have one. The family tomb at Mount Vernon is a quiet place to reflect while standing mere feet from the greatest American in history. There the family engraved these words of Jesus as Washington's declaration of truth: “I am the resurrection, and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” That is real freedom!

God bless America!

Williams...

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at Woody Gap School. This is sponsored and produced by the Suches Fire Department and always receives grand reviews! A concession stand, patriotic music, and other entertainment will be provided.

I wish you all a safe and relaxing holiday. We look forward to your company on Saturday night. For additional holiday events and celebrations, including the Lake Nottely Boat Parade and Independence Day Celebration at Vogel State Park, check out our website at www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com or call us at 706-745-5789.

Gray...

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gram of the Dugger family has removed all prior tapings and may/probably will cancel their program completely. In its place will be more very questionable “family-oriented” shows that I cannot even watch, without my stomach turning. Raise one up for the “winning side;” they have shown that an indiscretion by an immature boy who made a wrong decision, is to be held up for public scrutiny for the rest of his life. Hmmm, does that seem logical? Respectfully submitted for consideration,
Arlene M. Gray

UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

	Every Monday:	
Children's Story Time	Union County Library	11 am
Kiwanis Club	Steve's Steakhouse	Noon
Civil Air Patrol	Blairsville Airport	6:30 pm
Boy Scouts #101	United Methodist Ch	7 pm
	Every Tuesday:	
Get Fit	First UMC	5:15 pm
Smoky Mtn. Melodies	United Methodist Ch	6:30 pm
Hi Country Harmonizers	Branan Lodge	6:30 pm
	Every Thursday:	
Butternut Ladies Golf	Golf Course (Apr-Oct)	8:30 am
Masonic Luncheon	Cooks Restaurant	11:30 am
Rotary Club	So. Bank & Trust	Noon
Get Fit	First UMC	5:15 pm
	Second Wednesday of each month:	
GA Mtn Writers Club	So. Bank & Trust	10 am
Parkinson's Sup. Grp.	So. Bank & Trust	3 pm
	Second Thursday of each month:	
UC Interagency Grp.	Civic Cntr. Conf. Rm.	12 noon
Lions Club	Steve's Cookie Jar	6 pm
Appalachian Shrine Club	Clubhouse, Industrial Blvd.	6:00 pm
Democratic Party	UC Senior Center	6:30 pm
Trout Unlimited	So. Bank & Trust	6:30 pm
Sons Confederate Vet.	UCB Community Rm	7 pm
Knights of Columbus	Marian Hall	7:30 pm
	Second Friday of each month:	
Eastern Star #471	Location not listed	7:30 pm
	Second Saturday of each month:	
His Victory Riders	Blairsville Restaurant	8 am

Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse



Bell ringing information at 706-745-5493