

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## Careful Cooking

It seems that time is flying by and 2018 is almost gone. Halloween was here and gone in a flash. If we can keep Christmas at bay for just a few more days, we will celebrate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a time for family and friends to reflect on all their many blessings and to eat some good food. Good food means home cooking, and cooking can mean a fire.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, the average number of home fires on Thanksgiving Day is normally double the average number of fires in homes all other days. It's understandable. Thanksgiving involves much more time in the kitchen than normal. There are also distractions, such as family, friends and, of course, the game that everyone wants to watch. Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and fire injuries. With this in mind, Union County Fire Department would like to provide some cooking safety tips for this Thanksgiving holiday.

First, keep anything that can catch fire away from your stove top. Boxes, papers, wrappers, and grandma's cookbook can be all over the kitchen. It's best to keep these things away from the stove top. Second, don't leave the kitchen when cooking. I know there are people to talk to or maybe a game to watch, but every super chef must be aware of the happenings in the kitchen.

When you are done cooking, double check that everything is off, and you may want to consider unplugging small cooking appliances. If you cook like me, your smoke alarms may get tested. Never disable a smoke alarm while cooking. Most of the time, you will forget to return it to working order.

Another helpful tip is to be prepared for a fire. Check your fire extinguishers for readiness and make sure they are in the area. Keep a lid nearby when you're cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan, and turn off the stove top. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled. For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed. If the fire gets beyond your control, get out and call 911.

Union County Fire Department would like for everyone to have a safe and happy Thanksgiving. Enjoy the company. Enjoy the food. But be careful and be thankful during this Thanksgiving holiday. Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

**Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief**  
*David Dyer*



## Surprise of Gratitude

Please allow a personal anecdote from my new pastime, beekeeping. These critters and their colonies are so intricate, with much to teach us about the Creator.

It is possible to split a colony such that the new one produces its own queen. Every healthy colony has an effective queen. So, I started the process and waited a period of time to see if it worked. I didn't see positive evidence, so I bought and installed a queen. I took a painful sting in the face for my effort. Alas, that queen did not survive.

I pondered my next move for a few days and considered introducing another queen. I decided to inspect the colony one more time. I immediately noticed new larvae. Then I saw the queen as healthy as you please! The colony had done its job after all, despite my interference. The memory of my pain dissipated, and I was so surprised that I looked to the sky and laughed with God!

I wondered, if I could be so delighted over an insect, what other surprises of gratitude might I be missing? We are grateful for the big things like family additions, material blessings, and physical healing. But even so, it is human to overlook reasons to be thankful. People who know God can still refuse to honor Him or give thanks (Rom. 1:21). Jesus healed 10 lepers, but it was only the thankful one who received additional blessing (Luke 17).

The Bible says, "In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thes. 5:18). This is your challenge to look beyond the obvious reasons for thankfulness and seek the surprises, the hidden blessings of thankfulness. You can be thankful for small things, not just the big ones. You appreciate the colors of autumn across the mountains, but what about the red dogwood and yellow maple leaves in your hand?

You are thankful for things that happened, but what about the things that might have been that were not? You are thankful for good and happy things, but doesn't "in everything" forge a way forward in the face of evil, suffering and sadness? "Considering it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance" (James 1:2-3). If you find no other reason for thankfulness when life is hard, at

**All Things New**  
*Wayne Fowler*



See Fowler, page 5A

## Commissioner's Questions

**Q. When is the Union County monthly meeting?**

A. The official County Meeting is on the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. here in the Union County Courthouse. The purpose of the County Meeting is so that you will know about what is going on in the county. Contracts, resolutions, ordinance revisions (first and second readings), proclamations and much more are brought up at the meeting. Occasionally, something will come up to cause me to reschedule a county meeting, but it usually only happens once or twice a year. A notice is published in the North Georgia News and posted on the doors to the courthouse in the event rescheduling a meeting is necessary.

**Q. Can we ask questions at the county meetings? Where we came from you could only speak for five minutes and you had to write or call in prior to the meeting just to be placed on the agenda.**

A. Our meetings are not like that. During the first part of the meeting, we go over what business has been conducted in the previous month and the decisions that have been made. Once the business section of the meeting is over, which is usually less than 30 minutes, then the meeting is opened for questions and comments from attendees. You are welcome to ask any questions you would like to ask. Only if there were a controversial issue with the potential for lots of questions would we put a time limit on speaking. This has not happened in several years.

**Q. How long do county meetings usually last?**

A. Normally, less than 45 minutes, and often less than 30 minutes.

**Q. Do you usually have a lot of questions at a county meeting?**

A. Normally, we do not have a lot of questions, and half a dozen would be a lot. One of the main reasons is that we try to be very accessible throughout the week and month to the citizens, and we furnish information to the public on a regular basis so that you do not have to attend a county meeting in order to ask a question. However, we appreciate those who take the time to come to our meetings and encourage others to attend when you can.

**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**  
*Lamar Paris*



See Paris, page 5A

## Drug Free Mountain Life

### Synthetic Drugs Marketed to Kids

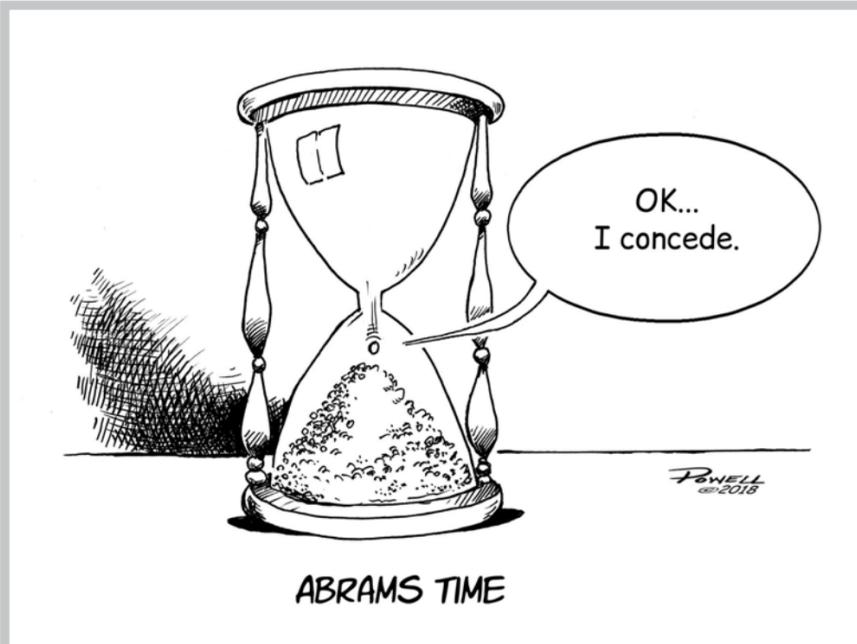
What do cartoons and synthetic marijuana have to do with each other? There's a new generation of synthetic drugs aimed at children and teens and the Drug Enforcement Administration is warning parents just how dangerous these drugs are.

The DEA is cracking down on more than 400 different types of synthetic drugs. These synthetic drugs are being sold in brightly-colored packaging, often labeled as potpourri, with catchy names like "The Hulk" to target youth and disguise their harmful effects.

"Probably one of the most common synthetic drugs that we've seen in packages such as this, that is referred to 'Breaking Bad.' It's just a marketing way to push out a product on the street. We call it synthetic cannabinoids, and, on the streets, it's referred to as synthetic marijuana, and really the goal of the packaging is to attract the users," said Wendell Campbell of the DEA.

See Drug Free, page 5A

The DRUG FREE MOUNTAIN LIFE campaign supports an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families, and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.



ABRAMS TIME

## Chamber of Commerce

While the year continues to fly by, the temperature is turning colder as we move into the Thanksgiving season. This is a time to reflect on our blessings: our family, the community, and we should continually express our gratitude to the Veterans who, through their sacrifices, have given us freedom to live and worship as we choose. While none of us agrees with all of the politics of our country, I think we all can agree that we live in the best country in the world. Michelle and I moved to the mountains (Michelle returned home) in 1995 to raise our children in a community where we felt safe and family was still an important way of life.

Mayor Jim Conley, Commissioner Lamar Paris and the rest of our community leaders work tirelessly to provide the quality of life that other communities our size only dream about. Our growing hospital system provides a great level of care, and the staff treats everyone as if they were family.

See Chamber, page 5A

**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**  
*Steve Rowe*



## Letters to the Editor

### Christian Denominations Join Hands

Dear Editor,

Some people don't understand Christianity, since they see many different denominations in which there seem to be differing beliefs. But in my experience, I've seen hands joined across different denominations in order to serve the needs of the community, because of their underlying deep unity.

As Thanksgiving approaches, it is touching to see the many hands and hearts that join to bring the blessings of a truly special Thanksgiving meal provided for those who may be alone or unable to be part of a family group they used to have, either because of illness, distance or financial need. For several years, area churches have provided Thanksgiving meals to anyone who request it, and the number last year grew to over 600. Local churches, businesses and individuals have all stepped in to make this happen. This year, Harmony Grove agreed to undertake the cooking of 50 turkeys, which is no small task and one that enables the needs of an even larger group to be cared for in a special way this year.

Requests made for delivery of a meal, pick-up of a meal or dine-in with all the trimmings are prepared and served by a virtual army of volunteers. Anyone interested in a meal can

See Gray, page 5A

### Midterm Elections

Dear Editor,

Our president, Donald J. Trump, said that the 2018 midterm elections were a victory.

They were a victory for every American, every veteran, and every military service member currently serving anywhere in the world! Thank you, Lord.

**Artie Hodgson Blairsville**

### Ever Vigilant

Dear Editor,

Fear not, fellow Americans, Trump will save us all from the rapidly approaching invaders advancing, on foot, toward our vastly undefended southern border. He has wisely deployed thousands of our best troops to protect us all from the marauders from Honduras and maybe even Guatemala, from the mothers, fathers and their children hoping to take over our government, our way of life, the very things we hold dear. Not to mention that they bring with them the fears of invasive diseases such as polio, gan-

See Schilling, page 5A

## RC&D

### Taxes & Tax Assessors

To the self-righteous, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did." I have hope to get into Heaven, after all, because I am a Tax Assessor, which is close to being a Tax Collector except assessors just tell the tax collector how much to go grab from you.

This week, I am at Callaway Gardens near Pine Mountain attending a 40-hour Tax Assessor training course. Callaway Gardens is decorated with the most beautiful Christmas lights and Christmas decorations that you can imagine and has the Fantasy in Lights going on now, which is a drive or shuttle through a dazzling display of Christmas lights that will be an event to remember. "There are eight million lights in 15 dazzling scenes covering 2,500 acres of spectacular scenery." Callaway Gardens is a go-to place for the light show in the fall, the blooming flowers of all kinds in the Spring, the lakes and walking/bike paths in the summer, and cozy getaway cabins in the winter.

It really sounds like a vacation, but we have been sitting in class for five days, and my old brain is crammed full. I am chairman of the Towns County Board of Tax Assessors, and I'm not sure if this is more like being a tax collector or prostitute, but we do the best we can! A Tax Assessor just figures out how much taxes you owe by various means (dart board, Ouija board, dice, etc.) to give to our "Zacchaeus" to collect. This week, we are learning about Special Assessments and Tax Exemptions. You can all be confident that we will know what we are doing when we use our Ouija board to determine how much you owe our "Zacchaeus." One thing you can count on with our assessor board is that everybody in Towns County will be treated equally when it comes to taxes.

We all must pay our fair share so the county can provide services for all to enjoy. Taxes are a topic that people don't like to talk about, but I'm always glad to pay my taxes, because without the revenue, counties could not provide security and public services, like sheriff's protection, a fire department, EMTs, ambulances, an air ambulance, road maintenance, schools, and many other things that we take for granted in our daily lives. Tax assessment is performed by the appraisers in the tax assessor's office. The three

See Riley, page 5A

**RC&D Executive Director**  
*Frank Riley*



## Around The Farm

### Uncle Bud and Cousin Junior

In 1954, Uncle Bud was entering his freshman year of high school at Phil Campbell. Dad and Uncle Bud's cousin, Junior, was an 11th-grader. Uncle Bud started at left tackle as a freshman on the Phil Campbell High School Football team. He was athletic and big, weighing in at 210 pounds. But Uncle Bud lacked two things.

First, he was inexperienced. Second, Uncle Bud lacked a mean streak. What Uncle Bud lacked, Junior made up for. Junior weighed close to 230 pounds. My Dad has told me he watched Junior carry two bales of hay, one in each hand, and toss each one 10 feet in the air on top of a hay wagon using only one arm. Junior also had a mean streak. He was the leader of the team because he was the meanest, toughest and strongest boy on the team. But he took care of his friends and family.

The first game of the year, the boys from Phil Campbell rode 12 miles south on Highway 181 to the little town of Hackleburgh. The Hackleburgh Team was good; they had made the state playoffs for a number of years consecutively. There was one boy that played with Hackleburgh that was a senior and was headed to play college football. He was recruited by Alabama, Auburn and Mississippi State. The boy's name was Hovater, and he was big, experienced and mean, as the boys from Phil Campbell were about to find out.

Phil Campbell had the ball on the 20-yard line on the first play from the line of scrimmage. Uncle Bud found himself playing left tackle, and directly across the line was this monster of a man named Hovater. As the quarterback from Phil Campbell began running through his cadence, the Hovater boy yelled, "Hut," and Phil Campbell's center snapped the ball. Before the referee could blow the whistle, the defensive line of Hackleburgh crashed through the young line of Phil Campbell and gang tackled the quarterback of Phil Campbell. A new quarterback had to come into the game because the starter was hurt on the first play of the game. This was a preview of things to come for Phil Campbell.

A few plays later, Uncle Bud was still playing left tackle. He was holding his own with the Hovater boy. Just before the ball was snapped, the Hovater boy called Uncle Bud a hillbilly redneck. As Bud looked up at the boy, Hovater spit tobacco juice right into his eyes. Uncle Bud was trying to wipe his eyes as the ball was snapped, and the Hovater boy caught Uncle Bud in the nose and stomped his right foot with

See Cummings, page 5A

**Around The Farm**  
*Mickey Cummings*



## Ladybugs

Ladybugs -- some people call them lady beetles -- move into our homes as temperatures fall. They are looking for a protected spot to spend the winter, also called overwintering. They will usually prefer houses that have light colored walls, because these reflect the sunlight. The Asian ladybug was imported to the U.S. in the late 1970s to eat aphids on pecan trees. Aphids are the small oval insects that feed on leaves, sucking the sweet sap out of the plants. Some people call them plant lice. Ladybugs love to eat aphids, making them an extremely beneficial insect to have around. They are good for your garden during the growing months.

We have ladybugs native to Georgia, but they do not do a good job controlling tree-feeding aphids. These imported Asian ladybugs feed on pecan aphids, reducing the need for pesticide sprays. However, this supply of inexpensive and safe aphid control is not entirely free, because they need to find a place to overwinter.

In Asia, these ladybugs overwinter on rock walls. In the U.S., they look for the walls and ceilings of buildings, including our homes. Many find their way inside. Though they do not bite, sting or eat our food, they are a nuisance. They can stain surfaces if you squish them or scare them. They can release a yellow fluid that has a strong odor.

How do we get rid of them? Since they are such a help, try not to kill them. Try to relocate them outdoors where they belong. This way, they can live to eat aphids again next year. Here are several suggestions.

The easiest way to dispose of them is to suck them up into a hand-held vacuum, then dump them back outside far away from the house. You can also sweep them out of the house, but be careful that the yellow fluid they give off does not stain anything.

If you use a regular vacuum, put the toe end of a pair of hose or knee-high stockings over the end of the vacuum hose. Hold it in place by putting a rubber band over the end of the vacuum hose and the stocking. Do not let the stocking get sucked up the vacuum hose. Vacuum up the bugs, pull out the stocking, and twist tie it until you can release the bugs outside. This is not a stocking to put over your chimney, but they could be a gift to your garden for next year.

Caulk up or otherwise seal cracks and holes that ladybugs can enter. Seal cracks around doors with weather-stripping. This will help keep out other pests, too, and reduce energy bills.

A final control would be to spray around

See Williams, page 5A

**Watching and Working**  
*Jacob Williams*



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