

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Recently, we had a response to a carbon monoxide (CO) incident. The incident involved high levels of CO in the home and resulted in a significant medical emergency for the residents. They were transported to the hospital and later transferred to a tertiary care center for further treatment. We have written of carbon monoxide in the past. We would like to remind everyone of the dangers of CO and how installation of a Carbon Monoxide Detector can provide a life-saving warning to occupants.

Carbon monoxide is called the "Invisible Killer" because it is a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas that can only be detected by a CO monitor. It is produced by the incomplete burning of various fuels including wood, charcoal, oil, kerosene, propane, and natural gas. According to the CDC, CO is "found in fumes produced any time you burn fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, or furnaces. CO can build up indoors and poison people and animals who breathe it." CO can be very dangerous and can affect everyone in the home or building.

There are several tips to prevent CO poisoning. People should have their heating system, water heater, and any other gas appliances inspected or serviced by a qualified technician. Chimneys should be inspected and/or cleaned every year. People should never use outdoor appliances such as charcoal grills, portable gas camp stoves, or generators inside the home, basement or garage.

The best practice is to have a CO monitor in your home to detect the CO levels before levels rise affecting the health of the occupants. People exposed to CO will start to present with certain signs and symptoms. These signs and symptoms begin with: headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness. Higher levels of CO or prolonged exposure produce signs and symptoms of mental confusion, vomiting, loss of coordination, and loss of consciousness. If not treated, CO poisoning can lead to death. A tell-tale sign is that more than one person in the home may have the same signs and symptoms.

If you suspect CO, evacuate the home or building to an area of fresh air. Call 911 and have the fire department check the home for CO levels. Working CO monitors work best to detect danger-

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



### Boldly and Joyously

I have questions. Strange and unusual events lead me to this basic question, how now do we live?

First, some current events questions I don't presume to answer. COVID emerged amid shocking warnings that it could be bad. Are economic shutdowns and personal isolation as bad as the disease? Cities in the USA burned while authorities allowed lawless autonomous zones. Will that kind of territorial lawlessness reappear again or elsewhere? Persistent claims of fraud challenge previous elections. Will Americans ever trust another election? When people stormed the capitol last week, did they really think anything good would come of it? Will Big Tech censor my speech if they disagree? Mr. Biden promised to sign the Equality Act in his first 100 days. Will this Act make people of faith less equal because we believe a disordered view of humanity should not be forced on citizens?

Jesus' fisherman friend wrote to believers scattered in a culture that discriminated against them for their faith (1 Peter). From that letter, here are five ways you can live boldly and joyously in today's world.

1. Love people. If you are obedient to the truth of Christ, then your soul has a new capacity to love people. Racism, envy, and strife are selfishness, not love. To "fervently love" one another is to boldly proclaim Jesus, who even said to love your enemy! (1:22)
2. Remember who you are. You are an "alien and stranger," just passing through this world. Feeling anxious and disenfranchised comes from a desire for control, a worldly lust that wages war against the soul. An eternal perspective brings joy. (2:11)
3. Live an honorable life. If someone slanders you as evil because you fear God and apply his truth to life, respond boldly with "good deeds" and "excellent behavior." People notice that, and it glorifies God. (2:12)
4. Speak truth. Align your faith, deeds, and words by setting up Christ Jesus as Lord in your heart. As you live with the joy and hope you have in Christ, people will notice. Be prepared to boldly "give an account" but with gentleness and reverence.

See Fowler, page 5A

**All Things New**  
*Wayne Fowler*



### Commissioner's Questions

Union County as a community is very respectful of the caretaking of local roadways when it comes to beauty and upkeep. Litter has never been a huge problem, but sometimes certain busy roadways do see a good bit of litter. We address this problem continuously, and we rely on Union County residents to help with it.

**Q. Do you have any plans or solutions to the litter problem in the county?**

A. Litter is a total frustration for me. Over the years we have tried so many different methods including having a special phone number for anonymously reporting littering. We have been a part of a regional group of counties, North Georgia Resource Management Authority to combat littering and promote recycling. We are a "Keep America Beautiful" affiliate member since 2000 and have secured grants from them for recycling trailers and teaching anti-littering in the schools. We have utilized hidden cameras, and the list goes on and on. But basically, nothing has really worked.

**Q. Do you have a long-term solution for littering problems?**

A. It is so frustrating to continue to see our beautiful county have litter and junk disbursed in various parts of the county. However, I guess we have to take comfort in the fact that it is better than it used to be - better, but not enough to satisfy me. It is so frustrating to know that we still have people who will simply throw out or allow it to be blown out of their trucks or vehicles. We must continue to work on it. We will never give up, and we are always open to new ideas.

**Q. How much money does it take to pick up litter in the county?**

A. We spend over \$200,000 a year on litter in the county. That is such a waste (literally). However, there is a fine line between too much enforcement (if you can catch them) and the increase in garbage being illegally dumped. At least we are not having the illegal dumping problem many counties have, except in rare instances. When it does happen, we go all out to trace it and prosecute the violators.

**Q. We still love the new recycle area and trash dispens-**

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



### Letters to the Editor

#### What Is Required

Dear Editor,

Here's one way we "make America great again." We acknowledge and celebrate the basic structure of the American judicial system that requires that a person charged with a criminal offense have an advocate to argue on his or her behalf. This basic tenet - principle, if you will - that everyone accused of a crime deserves a vigorous defense is an essential aspect of our criminal justice system. It follows that the practice of law is a necessary and admirable profession.

When a case goes to trial, the skill set that lawyers bring to court is the art of advocacy, which is exercised on behalf of their client. At that point, the job of the defendant's lawyer is to provide the best defense possible, regardless of whatever personal feelings that attorney may have concerning the moral or ethical shortcomings of his clients' behavior or character. This is how the system works.

With this said, here is one way we "make America great again." We ask - no, we demand that the legislators in our country, be they lawyers or not, leave the obligation to defend a "client"

See Wilson, page 5A

#### Hypocrisy of the Media

Dear Editor,

We can't and won't stay silent regarding the glaring double standards we are witnessing with the coverage of the recent protests in D.C. There has been rioting, looting, murders, and destruction of federal property for the last four years. The media and its cowardly minions who follow it like gospel have applauded and deemed these actions nothing but virtuous and noble.

The same people who were shocked that these protesters pushed past the police officers were the same ones vilifying officers and applauding the defunding of the police and even cheering on as officers were attacked the last four years. The same people who cried to have everyone's voice in America heard are now celebrating the censorship and rejoicing as free speech gets stripped away from half of its citizens.

They cry for unity after they called the last president illegitimate for the last four years and insulted every one of his supporters. The only way for unity would be if both sides are will-

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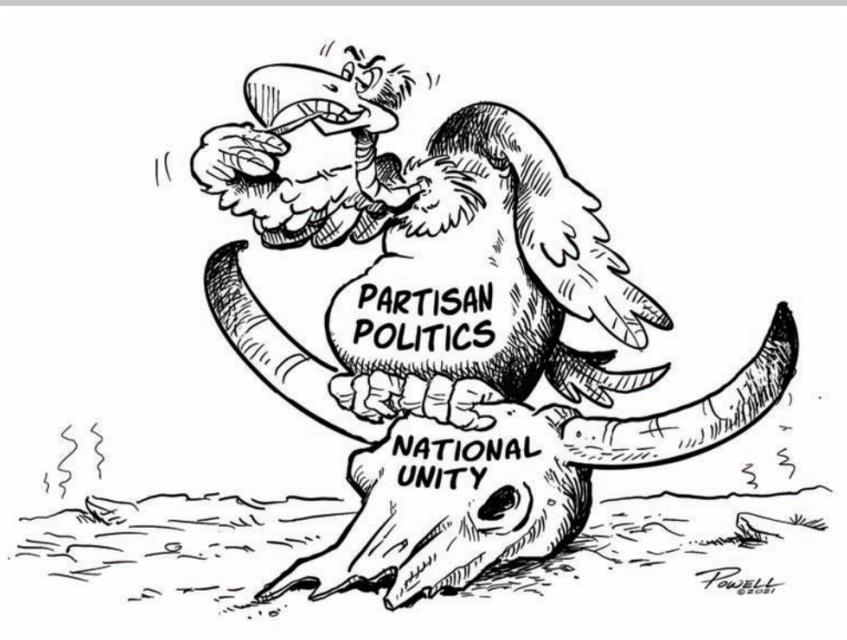
#### Climate Change

Dear Editor,

This is a response to a letter to the editor that appeared in the Jan. 6 issue of the North Georgia News titled "Climate Agenda?" I found this letter troubling. The "Climate Agenda?" letter was a response to another letter to the editor published in the Dec. 23, 2020, issue. Written by a medical doctor (MD), the December letter was nothing more than a list of previously published predictions of climate changes that could occur as a result of Global Warming. The content of the MD's letter as well as his profession were negatively criticized, but before I address this issue, I want to simply dismiss two ludicrous comments the critic also posted: "...political malpractice involving COVID" and "...computer modeling data ... set to produce those results."

The fact is that the medical profession deals with the complex processes of living entities, and like the theory of Global Warming is based on dynamic equilibriums, each with a possibility of an infinite number of chemical events. A change to any one of the events threatens their equilibriums. It doesn't take much to quickly disrupt the "living" process. However, where Global Warming is concerned, the massiveness of Earth makes it possible that the repercussions resulting from external forces may take days to years to manifest. It appeared that the critic does not recognize the difference between the two. The underlying principal of the Deniers of Glob-

See Tornabene, page 5A



#### "Attention!"

I was slated to graduate in 1975, and I knew that I wanted to go to college, but there was just one problem - my parents could not afford to send me. It seemed that the military was the only way. I could get the GI bill, which would cover my education. It would only be a quick three years, and then I could get out and on with college and a civilian career. So, I went down to the local recruiting office and took the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or ASVAB.

It was a good while before I heard anything, but the call came, it was nothing less than amazing. The recruiter told me I scored off the charts in math and spatial reasoning, and they offered me the chance to go to Army helicopter training. And that training landed me the dream job of a lifetime, being a crewchief for then Major General Nutting, based out of Fliogerhorst Kaserne in Hanau, Germany. I can't tell you how many days I explored Western Europe on Uncle Sam's dime, skiing the Zugspitze, overnighing in Hitler's summer home, touring communist Berlin behind the wall, swimming in the Mediterranean, hiking in the northern Italian Mountains, and the list goes on. It was a time when women were just starting to break into Army Aviation, both as crewchiefs and as pilots, and I suppose that worked to my advantage.

My bird, the UH-1, was the workhorse of the Vietnam War. Unlike the radar deflecting rough OD green paint jobs of most of the choppers, my bird was a slick painted green in which I took much pride keeping waxed and shining like a new copper penny. Responsible for the daily and regularly scheduled depot maintenance, the bird was mine, to have and to hold until transfer orders do us part. Alas, all good things come to an end.

In a bid to get promoted from E5 to E6, I was stalled on the promotion list because so many chiefs from the Vietnam War were hanging in to get their "20" - military lingo for staying in 20 years to get retirement. One day, I picked up a copy of the Stars and Stripes and saw a request for military club managers. Switch career fields, attend school at Fort Ben Harrison, Indiana, and upon graduation, immediate promotion one grade. That was for me. So, I hung up my wings and headed off to school.

This was also a field where there were not very many women, only about 20% of my class was female. Graduation saw me getting orders to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the very duty station where my father and "25 years my senior" husband were stationed in the Korean War era.

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**Military Musings**

*Janice Walters-Taylor*



#### Special People

Many of you will remember Mrs. Cummings. She was my second-grade teacher at Trappont School. Mrs. Cummings was married to my Papa's first cousin. She taught at least two generations of people in our family. So, she was very familiar with my Dad and I as well as our ways of doing things. I could always tell when I was in trouble with Mrs. Cummings, because she would call me by both names, "Mickey Paul."

I never received a whipping from Mrs. Cummings. But, if you have ever seen my writing, you would swear I have the worst penmanship of anyone you have seen. I owe it all to Mrs. Cummings. When I would get into trouble, she would make me write sentences on the blackboard. I usually had to write 250 of these sentences. One day right before Christmas, our latest assignment was due. We had to write a paper about the real meaning of Christmas. Each student had to read their paper aloud in front of the class. It came time for me to read my paper, so I made my way to the front of the room.

My route to the front of the room took me by Kathy's desk. Kathy was the prettiest girl in class. But, you notices pretty girls in the second grade? The only thing I knew about girls was that they interfered with fishing and baseball. Anyway, Kathy tried to slip me a note as I walked by her desk. To my horror, Mrs. Cummings also noticed Kathy trying to hand me a note. Mrs. Cummings told me to bring her the note. I did, and she threw it in the trash. I was really worried she would read the note in front of the class. So, when the note hit the trash can, I was relieved. But, Prince Albert also noticed the note, and he hollered out at the top of his lungs, "Kathy likes Mickey." Let me remind you that it is not a good thing for a second-grader to get embarrassed.

Before I could think about what to do, I realized there was a chalkboard eraser in my hand. The eraser was leaving my hand, and I exhibited perfect follow-through, just like my Dad taught me on the baseball field. The eraser hit the boy right between the eyes, and he let out a howl that reverberated throughout the little school. Before I could feel the satisfaction of a job well done, Mrs. Cummings had me writing, 250 times, the following sentence, "I will not throw erasers at Prince Albert Cummins."

I was very embarrassed and angry. Somebody had to pay for my anguish. All at once I noticed Mrs. Cummings had just refilled her coffee cup. The coffee was almost white due to the excessive amount of cream. So, each time Mrs. Cummings turned her head, I placed a little

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**Around The Farm**

*Mickey Cummings*



### Chamber of Commerce

We've had a chilly start to January with a few dustings of snow and a spike in COVID numbers leaving us all anticipating the spring thaw. Our frontline health care workers, from nurses to administrators to doctors to EMS and beyond, are absolutely maxed out. They're working countless hours to care for the sick and to vaccinate the healthy. They're placing themselves in harm's way to guarantee the hope of health for our community. They are truly heroes. Please take time to write a note, drop off some food, or extend gratitude in some creative way to any health care professionals you know. We truly are blessed to live here where our health is their top priority.

We've had a lot of questions regarding how folks can obtain the vaccine here locally. Currently, the Union County Health Department has been inundated with calls and drop-ins requesting the vaccine. While Georgia is still in Phase 1A of the vaccine roll-out, not everyone is

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**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**

*Steve Rowe*



### Crape Myrtle Pruning

Crape myrtles are a very common tree that many people like to plant in their home landscape or you may see them lining roads in towns. There are couple of reasons why crape myrtles make great landscape trees. The first is that they are very disease and insect resistant, as there are not too many pests that will bother them. Powdery mildew is the most serious disease issue that crape myrtles will usually have, and it rarely kills the tree.

Ambrosia beetles will attack crape myrtles, but generally they only attack trees that are already dead, dying, or stressed. Crape myrtles also come with a variety of flower colors, making them very attractive. Finally, crape myrtles come in a variety of sizes. Varieties range from dwarf to semi-dwarf to full size, meaning mature tree heights range from 3 to 30 feet tall.

Pruning is important for crape myrtles, because the blooms only form on new growth. Even more important is selecting the right sized variety for your location. If you select a variety that will grow to a good height for the spot where you're putting it, the pruning will not be difficult, because you won't be as concerned with managing the plant's size.

Now is a good time of year to prune your crape myrtles. Excessive pruning can lead to problems with disease and insects, because the tree is stressed. Bad pruning practices are called CRAPE MURDER. Crape murder generally involves topping the tree, or cutting back all the branches to 3 to 4 feet above the ground. This will result in an oddly shaped tree that produces a lot of suckers.

To properly prune a crape myrtle start at the base of the tree and work your way up. You're looking for suckers, if you find them prune those off. Once you get to where the branches are, remove crossing branches. Crossing branches will rub against each other when the wind blows and create sites where disease and insects can get in. As the tree grows you can remove branches from the lower third of the tree. Removing those branches will expose the trunk character. Some people like to prune off the old seedheads. I think they're an attractive feature. With new growth in the spring the old seedheads will fall off. On some varieties of crape myrtles you can prune in the summer after the blooms are spent to create another flush of flowers. A second bloom is difficult to force on varieties that bloom after mid-July.

A common misconception is that crape myrtles have to be pruned to produce flowers. This is not true. Pruning allows to you shape the

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**Watching and Working**

*Jacob Williams*



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