

Home Fire Extinguishers

Our home is one of our most prized possessions and we want to protect it. One way is to prepare for home emergencies. An essential part of an overall home safety plan is to have home fire extinguishers.

When purchasing a fire extinguisher, you must consider the class and size. Fire extinguishers are classified based on what is burning. Class A extinguishers are used on burning ordinary materials such as paper or wood.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief David Dyer



The size of extinguisher needed depends on the potential amount of fire. Fire extinguishers for the home range from 2 1/2 lbs. to 20 lbs.

Once you have made your purchase, you need to learn how to use it. Almost anyone can use a fire extinguisher. The common practice is the P.A.S.S. technique: P - Pull the pin on the fire extinguisher; A - Aim the fire extinguisher low, with the nozzle pointed at the base of the fire; S - Squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent; S - Sweep the nozzle from side to side while pointed at the base of the fire until it is extinguished.

The home fire extinguisher should be stored near areas of potential fires, such as kitchens, fireplaces, or garages. However, do not store them so near the potential fire areas that the fire or smoke prevents access to them.

Having fire extinguishers in your home is an especially important part of an overall safety plan. They are simple to use, re-

See Dyer, page 5A

First Things, First

Life can get complicated in a hurry, can't it? When it does, you yearn for simplicity. In those moments, you need a way to prioritize.

Grand jury duty complicated my life. Many in the jury pool took time away from work to report to the courthouse. The nominal pay is little consolation for a worker supporting a family. But when the court officials thanked the jury for our service, it prompted me to reconsider the workers' plight.

All Things New Wayne Fowler



World War II put civilization in peril. C.S. Lewis blamed a focus on preserving peace at all costs and maintaining a quality of life instead of confronting evil, which had shattered their tranquility.

The ultimate answer to Lewis' question is clear to the believer. Jesus said not to worry about food, drink, and clothing, "for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt. 6:31-33).

Even non-believers like Scott Adams (creator of Dilbert comic strip) recognize this. His hypothesis is that life is complicated and unhappy if you must rely on many things that really are unreliable.

Having God as your "first thing" has practical implica-

See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

Q. There is quite a bit of talk online and in local north Georgia newspapers about some kind of plant infestation in Lake Chatuge. What is that all about?

A. Most of the chatter has to do with the identification of an invasive aquatic weed named Parrot Feather or Myriophyllum Aquaticum. It is a rooted aquatic plant that colonizes slow-moving, nutrient rich waters.

Q. Where did this plant come from initially?

A. Parrot Feather is native to South America. Due to its attractiveness, it was likely first introduced to the United States as an aquarium or water garden plant that escaped cultivation or was dumped into a natural water body.

Q. Why is Parrot Feather considered an invasive species?

A. Invasives grow in large abundances to quickly displace native plants by competing for space, sunlight, and nutrients. Parrot Feather reproduces easily by fragmentation; therefore, it can easily spread to new locations.

Q. What methods can be used to control Parrot Feather?

A. Due to its ability to reproduce through fragmentation, physical control of parrot feather is limited. Mechanical cutting or harvesting can spread plant fragments in a water body, unintentionally exacerbating the infestation.

Q. What can we as residents of Union County do to prevent this invasive plant from taking root in Lake Nottely?

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris



Solitude

Solitude is a precious gift we can bestow on ourselves. It is the time of silence that totally belongs to us within our private world. My solitude means sitting on my front porch, weather permitting. It is a restful and relaxing arena except when my three cats want to play the game of "havo"

Successful Mental Health Dr. James Ray Ashurst PH.D.



When dealing with solitude, one must realize that being alone (solitude) is not the same as being lonely. They are two separate entities. Engaging in solitude can be a mental health benefit. It offers the wonderful opportunity to recharge one's mental and emotional batteries.

Loneliness expresses the pain of being alone, and solitude expresses the glory of being alone. -Paul Tillich

See Ashurst, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Why is my grocery bill so high?

We hear reports everyday about how well the economy is recovering: unemployment remains low, inflation is cooling, the expected recession hasn't happened. We are outperforming our peer countries, wages have continued to rise and gas prices have fallen more than 80 cents a gallon since summer.

U.S. Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania has released a report detailing how big corporations are using inflation as a cover to raise prices and are continuing to report record profits at the expense of the rest of us.

See Maloney, page 5A

Responding to Two Letters

Re: "Potholes Repaired" - I appreciate the potholes being repaired at Murphy Highway and 515. However, before we praise our commissioner, take a ride north on Murphy Highway and see all the potholes that haven't been filled.

Re: "Workforce Housing" - I have to agree with everything said. Absolutely correct. Our county government should not be in the business of funding a housing development. To address your question, "Where do the people of Blairsville get a vote on this?" We aren't going to!

Unfortunately, when you have a county run by the same Sole Commissioner for 24 years, he makes all the decisions and we the people (citizens) of Union County do not have a say. This is why a Board of Commissioners is needed.

Drinking Water

In the Feb. 14, 2024, edition of the North Georgia News was a seemingly newsworthy article about Blairsville receiving a loan to establish new wells; however, deep into the article it was casually stated that ... one of the existing wells has been testing positive for PFOS, a (specific?) type of "forever chemical" known to be toxic for consumption.

See Tornabene, page 5A

Competence Crisis

There's a competence crisis at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

This month, Special Counsel Robert Hur, whom Attorney General Merrick Garland appointed to investigate President Biden's mishandling of classified documents, released a lengthy bombshell report following his months-long investigation.

United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde



According to the 388-page document, Hur's investigation "uncovered evidence that President Biden willfully retained and disclosed classified materials after his vice presidency when he was a private citizen." These materials included "marked classified documents about military and foreign policy in Afghanistan, and notebooks containing Mr. Biden's handwritten entries about issues of national security and foreign policy implicating sensitive intelligence sources and methods."

Where did Joe Biden store these classified documents? In "the garages, offices, and basement den" of his Wilmington, Delaware, mansion.

These documents have been lying around for years - in some cases decades - dating back to Joe Biden's time as Vice President in the Obama Administration (2009-2017) and U.S. Senator for Delaware (1973-2009).

Clearly, Joe Biden mishandled sensitive, classified documents.

Yet Special Counsel Hur declined to recommend criminal charges against the President, claiming Biden is not mentally fit for trial. "We have also considered that, at trial, Mr. Biden would likely present himself to a jury, as he did during our interview of him, as a sympathetic, well-meaning, elderly man with a poor memory."

Folks, if Joe Biden is not competent to stand trial, then he is certainly not competent to lead the free world. Americans deserve the truth about the mental state of our Commander-in-Chief, which is why I'm demanding that the Department of Justice release the transcript from Special Counsel Hur's interview with President Biden.

To make matters worse, Biden held a rare press conference hours after the alarming report was released in an attempt to show the nation that he is mentally fit to be President of the

See Clyde page 5A

Union County Gold

I have heard people say that gold was found in Union County before any was found in Lumpkin County. It has also been said that the gold from here is among the purest in the world and that experts could tell if a sample of gold came from the area simply by its shade of color.

Around The Farm Mickey Cummings



Bud Akins gave me an article by a gentleman named Dwayne Ramey about gold mining in Union County, and another person by the name of Bruce Roberts also provided a great deal of information to me so this article could be written.

Most of the gold mining in Union County area was done in the area around Coosa Creek and the Bowers Cove area. Some of the people which mined this area were: James Nix, Frank and Zed Summerour, Human Addenword, Jody Bowers, Joe Rich, Herschel Summerlin, March Addington along with John and Sam Tider.

James Bly Nix and his brother John decided to mine for gold in the Choestoe area, but, the Civil War delayed their efforts. According to the information I read, John was killed in a Virginia cornfield while serving his state of Georgia.

The first steam shovel in Union County was built by Frank Summerour on Coosa Creek. Two of the gold mines the Summerour brothers operated can still be seen on Gold Mine Knob, which is located south of Owl Town Gap.

Robert Corn, his father and one other man were hunting in the area of Little Duncan Ridge when they found a fellow digging in a bank. This fellow was living in a shelter made of tree limbs, leaves and bark.

One day Hamby came back to the Corn house with a sack full of quartz which contained gold. They shipped 45 pounds of this to a mining company in London, England.

See Cummings, page 5A

Chamber of Commerce

I would like to take a moment to thank the North Georgia News for the coverage they provide to the Chamber for our events and the exceptional coverage of our area.

Several years ago, the Chamber partnered with Collette Travel to provide group trips to mostly international locations.

I have been told that many people used these trips as their annual vacations. These trips were suspended due to the travel restrictions imposed around the world. However, we have had a number of requests to provide information regarding resuming these trips.

If you are interested in attending, please See Chamber, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President Steve Rowe



Chill Hours

This week I'm going to talk about chill hours and the affect that cold has on plants. The cold weather can feel very dreary and like there is no life with plants not growing, trees without leaves, and wildlife holing up for the winter.

For some plants they are not just responding to the cold, but they are also responding to the change in day length as the days grow shorter in winter and then longer into the spring. These kinds of plants are called photosensitive, because they are responding to the changes in light.

Many fruit plants require chill hours to be able to put on blooms. Chill hours is a count of the number of hours where the temperature is 32 and 45 degrees Fahrenheit. After a satisfactory number of chilling hours has been reached, the plant will break into bloom.

In these plants, a repressor gene is keeping the plants from blooming. The cold causes that repressor gene to be altered so that it's no longer controlling the blooming of the flower. That way when warmer temperatures arrive the flowers can bloom out.

The timing of when cold happens is also critical. Oftentimes in the mountains, we'll have a late freeze after many of the apple or peach trees have already bloomed. Freezing temperatures after bloom can result in flowers dying and falling off.

See Williams, page 5A

Watching and Working Jacob Williams



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West Shawn Jarrard Derek Richards Todd Forrest Lowell Nicholson Publisher/Owner General Manager/Editor Advertising Director Sports Editor 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 (Union County) - One Year \$45 INCLUDING UNION COUNTY CUSTOMER REQUEST MAIL SERVICE. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$10. 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

A. So far, there have been no reports of Parrot Feather in Lake Nottely. However, a major help in controlling the plant would be clean boat hygiene practices – particularly of boats that are launched in different bodies of water. Owners should check boats, trailers, gear, and motors for plant fragments before launching into Lake Nottely and dispose of them at a location that is away from the water. Owners should also drain the boat motor and

bilge. Allow boats to dry overnight at least 24 hours before putting the boat in at another lake. We are now developing signage to post at the Lake Nottely boat ramps to remind those launching boats about the potential for infestation in the lake. Additionally, if anyone sees Parrot Feather anywhere on Lake Nottely, tell someone who can take action. You can call my office at 706 439-6000, or you can notify TVA at (423) 751-0011.

Ashurst... continued from Page 4A

The advantage of experiencing solitude over loneliness is that the individual in solitude can return to his or her social relationships when craving the connection. Not so with loneliness. In solitude an individual can divide one's time and attention between still being with others while having periods of time alone.

When a person is feeling the dragon of loneliness, the person can convert the loneliness into solitude with effort and work. That is a good change. Solitude is a positive state of mind, and it is a time for reflection and evaluation. The individual can find the time alone to actually be comforting, rewarding, soothing, and fulfilling one's goals in

life. The moments of reflection can be awesome. There is even a relief from being with others all of the time.

Let's face the fact: all of us need some alone time without any expectations from anyone.

Being in a solitary mood and environment allows a person to learn about oneself. Silence is golden! Reflecting about one's past, present, and future can be a growing experience. It is greatly needed. Learning about oneself does not need to be terrifying. It can be exciting and wholesome.

Loneliness can be conquered only by those who can bear solitude.
-Paul Tillich

Maloney... continued from Page 4A

2020 through July 2022, inflation rose by 14% while corporate profits rose by more than 74% during the same time period.

The Federal Reserve found that corporate profits contributed a large percentage to inflation in the first year of the pandemic, including accounting for all of the inflation from July 2020 through July 2021 and 41% of all inflation from July 2020 through July 2022.

According to an analysis by the nonpartisan Economic Policy Institute, corporate profits accounted for 54% of food price increases between 2020 and 2021. For the four decades prior, only 11% was attributed to corporate profits.

A similar report, compiled by think tank Groundwork Collaborative, appears to show that high corporate profits are a main driver of ongoing inflation and that companies continue to keep prices high even as their costs go down. The inquiry also found that corporate profits accounted for 53% of inflation during the sec-

ond and third quarters of 2023. In the 40 years prior to the pandemic, profits drove 11% of price growth. Costs have come down, but corporations have not been very quick to pass the savings on to their customers who are still paying about 25% more for their groceries.

The White House Council of Economic Advisers has found in a new report that grocery store profit margins remain higher than pre-pandemic levels and could be contributing to the high price of food. The analysis shows that food and beverage stores have increased their margins to the highest levels in the past two decades.

Some will say that the high prices reflect supply chain issues, transportation costs and global unrest. But the profit numbers are suspicious. Corporations must be held accountable if they are taking advantage of consumers. We all need to be treated fairly and we need answers that directly address the problem.
Michelle Maloney

Williams... continued from Page 4A

be damaging to plants as well. They are forced into freezing temperatures before being able to harden off properly, and can be severely damaged.

Some plants are able to tolerate cold weather while others can't. Scientists believe the ability to tolerate cold weather comes down to the makeup of the cell membranes in the plant. Cell membranes are made up of fat molecules. Some of them are saturated and some unsaturated. Similar to

what you read on the nutrition facts label for packaged food. Scientists think that plants with a higher ratio of saturated fats can freeze more easily.

Winter can seem like a dead time of the year, really it's Mother Nature's way of preparing for spring.

If you have questions about the effect of winter on plants contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

The company responded back to Hamby stating that they would be willing to finance up to \$4 million and encouraged him to begin purchasing mineral rights for the company. But, as fate would have it, England declared war on Germany and the operation was delayed. Meanwhile Hamby remained with the Corn family for about 18 months and continued prospecting. On one particular day he found a gold nugget which weighed 1 pound.

Soon thereafter, he announced to the family that he would soon be leaving for Seymour, Indiana, to discuss marriage proposal and a mining partnership with a lady. He was seen later carrying two large and heavy suitcases at Harve Davis' store where he caught a bus to Gainesville.

Later in November Mr. Corn received a letter from this Hamby fellow explaining that he had married a wealthy lady and formed a mining partnership with her. He also asked him to hire 10-15 men to begin mining on his leases and that he would soon arrive with heavy machinery needed for a mining

operation. Hamby was never heard from again.

His wife soon came to Union County to look at his mining prospects and explained that on her wedding day her husband had received a visitor. He later asked her to borrow \$450 and then went to Pittsburgh to obtain mining equipment. He never came back so she contacted the FBI. They caught two men trying to smuggle gold out of the country. One was caught on the west coast while the other was caught on the east coast. Hamby's wife speculated that these two men had murdered Hamby for the gold he acquired in Union County.

The largest quantities of gold found in the eastern United States were found in the Georgia Gold Belt which extended from Alabama to Rabun County, Georgia. The gold found in Georgia was close to 24 karat purity. Most of the gold found here was mixed with eroded rock and quartz.

Recently, Bruce Roberts gave a presentation on Gold Mining. His presentation included a discussion on where the gold can be found geologically speaking. There are fingers of areas where the gold is located. One of which is the Dahlonega area and the other is where the Coosa mines are located, and yet another is the Gum Log area which extends into Towns and over toward Hightower Bald.

Some of the mines in Union County included the Coosa Creek Mine, The Wellborn-Hill Mine, the Brown Shaft Mine, the Old Gum Log Mine and the Hunt Property Mine.

Fowler... continued from Page 4A

tions. Faith is the antidote to fear and worry. It means having pre-set priorities, clear moral boundaries, and a future hope. It seasons your time management, people skills, and personal resiliency. It means having church friends. (Resource: look up "simple church.") Life works better when you have a firm starting point, a clear worldview, and friends to share the journey.

When life gets complicated, what is your starting point? How do you prioritize your life? Jesus' answer is both simple and profound. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Put first things, first.

Clyde... continued from Page 4A

United States. Yet it was a total trainwreck; Biden snapped at reporters, couldn't remember a touching detail related to his late son, and referred to the President of Egypt as the President of Mexico.

I have serious concerns about the President's ability to lead our country, especially as Commander-in-Chief. Please know that I will continue closely monitoring this situation, and I remain committed to delivering transparency to the American people.

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

contact Abby at the Chamber, or stop by for a brochure. Please call the Chamber to make reservations to attend at 706-745-5789.

It takes you to make life better in Blairsville.

Tornabene... continued from Page 4A

in 2019.

After the fact, the citizens of Union County were informed that an agreement had been made between the City of Blairsville and State Senator Gooch to remove leachate from one of his landfills with his trucking company dumping it into the city's wastewater treatment plant (CWWTP). The city benefited by receiving a "Tipping Fee" for a facility built by the support of the residents of the county. A furor erupted and the contract for leachate was quickly terminated.

The chemo-markers for identifying leachates are PFAS and does not imply it is the only toxic products present. After specific letters spearheaded by the then president of Lake Nottely Improvement Association, EPD contracted EPA to analyze the leachate for PFAS. It was confirmed but the EPA report stated that no PFAS compounds were detected in the effluent from the CWWTP. This is not correct. EPA has a protocol that they report only those compounds that they can accurately quantify by comparison to an internal standard that they add to each sample. The instrumentation used in the analysis has a detectable limit in the pico quantity range (10 to the minus power of 12). The internal standard EPA limits are set around 10 to the minus power of 3. The computer-generated fragmentation patterns provided by EPA recorded and identified in the effluent the same PFAS found in the leachate in the same relative ratios, but in much lower concentrations.

My experience over a 50-year span has convinced me that these are real compounds. PFAS and many other manmade chemicals do not have a specific toxicity level to be effective or a specific site of function. Their effects are manifested via accumulation over time, usually in organs that have a high membranous structure. These manmade chemicals become embedded into membranes that modify their structure and transport mechanisms, thus interfering with normal human development. Obviously, they are most dangerous to the development process in children. These features are best established in the studies of plastics vs autism. The mindboggling reaction is to wonder if the manmade compounds (including herbicides, pesticides, plasticizers, etc.) commonly found in water are responsible for the enormous increase in the numbers of children with mental and social development deficiencies? Research around the world on how to remove them from water has been ongoing for decades with little practical success. The only effective remedy is to remove the source.

these are real compounds.

A good source for keeping up with drinking water quality is <https://www.ewg.org/>.
Thomas G. Tornabene

Dyer... continued from Page 4A

markedly effective, and can extinguish small fires before they become larger, out of control fires.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Week Six: Legislative Business Under the Gold Dome

We've hit the midpoint of the 2024 Legislative Session, and I'm proud to say that we're making significant strides in advancing Republican values and priorities for Georgia. By slashing bureaucratic red tape, upholding our strong budgetary principles and standing firm in support of law enforcement, we're delivering concrete results that align with our conservative principles. But let's not rest on our laurels just yet. Despite the progress we've made, there's still plenty of important work to be done before we "Finish the Drill." And let me tell you, representing the 51st Senate District isn't just a duty—it's a privilege that I take very seriously.

Over the past week, I've been hard at work championing legislation that directly benefits our constituents. I'm particularly pleased to highlight the passage of Senate Resolution 543, which stands in support of bolstering protections for America's borders. In today's climate, with our southern border in crisis and illegal immigration running rampant, it's critical that Georgia takes a strong stance on this issue. Following the resolution's successful passage, I proudly joined Governor Brian Kemp to announce that the Georgia National Guard will be deploying additional troops to fortify our southern border. Under the failed leadership of Joe Biden, every state is a border state, and dangerous crimi-

nals and illicit drugs are flooding into our communities. It's high time we take decisive action to secure our border and protect our citizens.

Additionally, I'm proud to report that we have passed two more of our caucus priorities, Senate Bill 426 and 349. Senate Bill 426 tackles tort reform by curbing frivolous lawsuits and creating a more business-friendly environment, laying the groundwork for continued economic growth and prosperity in our state—exactly the kind of policies that all of Georgia should stand for. Senate Bill 349 protects homeowners against large property tax increases stemming from the unstable increases in property values. This issue affects every homeowner in Georgia. While we cannot change the rapid inflation created by Biden administration, we can create changes within our own system to protect Georgian's.

Each week at the Capitol presents opportunities to connect with constituents and recognize the outstanding efforts of community leaders who share our conservative values. Just recently, I had the honor of acknowledging Georgia's Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), who work tirelessly to advocate for children in foster care. Their commitment to protecting vulnerable children reflects the core principles of our party.

I want to extend a special invitation to students aged



Majority Leader Steve Gooch

12 to 18 to serve as Capitol Pages. This program offers a unique opportunity to witness firsthand the legislative process and learn about the importance of conservative values in shaping our state's future. I encourage any students interested to please reach out Chloe Satterfield at chloe.satterfield@senate.ga.gov.

As we press forward with the 2024 Legislative Session, rest assured that I'll continue to fight for the conservative ideals that we hold dear. If you ever need assistance with legislative matters, don't hesitate to reach out. Together, we'll keep Georgia on the right track.

Sen. Steve Gooch serves as Senate Majority Leader. He represents the 51st Senate District which includes Dawson, Fannin, Gilmer, Lumpkin, Union and Pickens counties and a portion of White County. He may be reached at 404-656-7872 or via email at steve.gooch@senate.ga.gov.
NFeb21 Z16CA