

Outdoor Burning

During this time of the year, property owners may be disposing of leaves and other yard debris by outdoor burning.

Property owners are allowed to burn hand-piled leaves and/or yard debris as long as they follow the outdoor burning safety standards as explained by the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC).

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief David Dyer



The outdoor burning safety standards are actions and precautions that property owners must take to provide safety and to prevent out of control wildfires.

The first "S" represents Space. There must be 25 feet or more between the fire and woodlands. The second "S" also represents Space stating that there must be 50 feet or more between the fire and any structures.

The "R" represents Reasonable Precautions. The concept of reasonable precautions is to have tools and measures in place to prevent the fire from escaping.

Just as a reminder, property owners are only allowed to burn certain materials. Only hand-piled leaves or naturally occurring yard debris can be burned.

See Dyer, page 5A

Athletic Theologians

Scottie Scheffler won the Players Championship this month, becoming the new world No. 1 golf professional. After his Masters win last year, he explained that winning at golf is not his ultimate purpose.

In other news, Derek Carr signed on as the franchise quarterback for the New Orleans Saints. At his press conference he said, "I have a very strong faith in God.

Turns out, athletes can be rather good theologians! I'm proud of these Christian young men for using their platforms to glorify God.

Embedded in the athletes' comments is the truth that God is personal and relevant to us in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These athletes' personal faith informs their public identities and private family lives. They may not "throw Bibles," but if these young men weren't motivated to winsomely represent Christ, they wouldn't have spoken about faith.

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Too many people in Union County are leaving their poor dogs out in the cold and rain. Some howl and cry all night long. This should be considered animal cruelty and needs to be enforced.

A. We certainly want to remind folks that during this very cold and wet weather, we must look after our pets. However, I also want to caution the public that cold temperatures impact different pets in different ways.

Q. Did the county have a lot of flood damage from the heavy rains in the past few weeks?

A. While there were a lot of washed out culverts and several places where the creeks got out of their banks, we have been very lucky. Most folks have had wind-related problems that resulted in fallen trees.

Q. We really have wanted to see some snow fall and wonder when it is more likely to happen?

A. Snow or sleet are impossible to predict because it is usually just a few degrees of temperature that makes the difference. According to the National Weather Service, snow falls when there are low temperatures with no melting in mid-air.

Q. It seems that we have had milder winters recently. Do you think that is a sign of climate change?

A. I try to never get into this discussion because I do not think anyone really knows the future. However, it is true that the Road Department has had to use very little salt this year.

Q & A from Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris



See Paris, page 5A

Shrink Washington...

Shrink Washington. Grow America: As you know, the U.S. reached its \$31.4 trillion debt ceiling in January, prompting the Treasury Department to take so-called "extraordinary measures"

I strongly disagree with the Secretary's assessment, as the nation continues to bring in over \$400 billion each month in revenue and a simple proper prioritization of debt payments first would ensure we do not default.

United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde



Yet the House Freedom Caucus is laser-focused on responsibly navigating the debt ceiling debacle and getting our economy back on track.

See Clyde, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Bankers' Responsibility

Dear Editor,

Banking officials don't have to take responsibility. Through bad management, Silicon Valley Bank based in California and Signature Bank based in New York did not have the funds to cover depositors' withdrawals.

The FDIC is supposed to be an independent government agency that gets its funds from member banks, which pays premiums to cover their customers deposits. FDIC insurance backs up each account up to \$250,000.

Why does the Biden administration think they have to take responsibility away from individuals that don't do their jobs? Some will say "you can't let the 16th largest bank in American fail."

George Burch

Misnamed

Dear Editor,

A group of people in the county have organized themselves and named their group, Conservative Citizens... whatever... I am here to say they are misnamed.

A conservative person would cringe at their proposal of increasing government, adding layers of bureaucracy to a department, and allowing no accountability to reign supreme in our local government.

Mr. Lamar has done many good things for this county, but it is becoming increasingly clear that his time is past. His recent decisions and the

See Lausier, page 5A



Letters to the Editor

My Thoughts & Experiences

Dear Editor,

Can you imagine wanting freedom so bad, to travel so far, putting your life in danger to get to America - to get away from cartels and dictators that control your country and your life? Socialism controls every aspect of your life, and what is so sad, all the people coming to America for freedom are leaving one socialist country for soon to be another socialist country, America.

See Thompson, page 5A

Community Spirit

Dear Editor,

I didn't recognize the older gentleman as he entered the restaurant. The waitress seating him asked, "Are you by yourself today?" "Yes, ma'am," he responded. On the way to his table, some customers nodded and others said good morning to the stranger.

There are many things about this area that make it a great place to live. Newcomers quickly blend into the friendly culture here because the locals show them how to do it. Therefore, no one feels alone here. The community, as a whole, projects warmth and acceptance, always willing to reach out to others.

Gene Vickers

Real Char'acters

As a young boy I heard my grandfather would use strange words that were spoken by people in England during Chaucer's time. The Appalachian Mountains were isolated from the rest of the world during my grandfather's childhood.

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



When papa said My Papa John "was a real char'acter," he meant his grandfather was a person that stood out because of their nature and character. Sometimes Papa would use the phrase to indicate a person was full of the devilment like his grandfather, or he might use the phrase to mean a person's intelligence and character should be emulated.

For example, John Cummings was a blacksmith. He was big, brawny, strong, loved to drink, loved to fight and loved the ladies. One time he went to a wedding and enjoyed a little too much of the apple brandy before the wedding even began.

Later in his life his grandson which became my Papa and one of his cousins went to visit their Grandfather in Missouri one summer. They were helping him in the blacksmith shop when John asked the cousin to hand him a hammer.

He had five sons, all of which became farmers. Lon was my great grandfather and he owned a large farm on the road between Phil Campbell and Trapptown.

See Cummings, page 5A

Chamber of Commerce

Have you signed up for the 2023 Shoot for the Stars Golf Tournament? Registration is now open and the teams are filling up fast. Last year, thanks to our players and sponsors, we were able to donate a combined total of \$7,900 to the scholarship funds of Union County High School and North Georgia Technical College.

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President Steve Rowe



This year we still have an opportunity for you, to not only field a team but to also be one of our sponsors. Sign up today to be a Hole Sponsor or a Tee Box Sponsor and place your company's tent or table on a tee box where you can hand out drinks, snacks, or branded swag or offer a fun game to interact with the golfers.

Come join us on Earth Day, April 22nd, to help us clean up the community. Meet us at

See Chamber, page 5A

To Burn or Not to Burn?

We are entering the time of year when prescribed burns are more and more common. I want to talk about why prescribed burns are important. I think that generally we understand that they are important, otherwise we wouldn't take the risk of doing them, but they are important in more ways than many understand.

To talk about the importance of prescribed burns we also have to talk about natural forest succession. Forest succession can look different depending on where you live. For us, it can start with meadow lands. Meadows would have plants like asters, queen Anne's lace, and broom sedge. After about five years, the meadows will start to grow up some more and brush like sumac and blackberry will start to take over.

So, what's wrong with allowing our forests to stay at the mature oak-hickory stage? And if it is wrong then what can be done about it? To answer the first question when all or a majority of our habitat is in the mature oak-hickory stage we have less diversity of habitat. Diversity of habitat is necessary to be able to support a diversity of wildlife, plants, fungi, and everything else that creeps, crawls, and grows in the woods.

Controlled burns reset the natural forest succession process, allowing a diverse array of habitats that support a diverse array of wildlife.

See Williams, page 5A

UGA extension Watching and Working Jacob Williams



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## Ten Things You Did Not Know About Freemasonry



### Part 6 of 10: There are NO secret Masonic symbols on the U.S. dollar bill.

The back of the dollar bill features an incomplete pyramid with an eye on top of it. Many people -- including some Freemasons -- say it's a Masonic symbol, but that's not the case. These symbols have been used by many different groups, including Masons, throughout history.

Those who are pro-Freemasonry, as well as those who are anti-Freemasonry will tell you that these symbols were put on our currency because

it makes the Lodges seem important. If you have a symbol on the dollar bill, that would be a big deal, however the Eye of God is a common icon for God looking over the affairs of man. It is an icon that appears in cultures across the centuries.

The uncompleted pyramid, which also appeared on a 50-pound Colonial note, represented that our country was not yet completed, that we were continuing to grow.

### Paris... continued from Page 4A

while the public may wish we had more snow, from the Road Department's perspective, it has been a nice change. Please keep in mind that we do need to have more freezing weather to assist the environment with eliminating some pesky bugs that appear in the Spring.

#### Q. What is your memory of snow in the mountains growing up?

A. I do not ever remember having any 65 degree weather in the winter. It seems like it was always just cold until Spring. Growing up in Union County, we just about always had several inches of snow each year. Back in the '60s and '70s, Richard Russell Highway would often be snow and ice covered several times in the winter. Crowds of people would ascend up the mountain in jeeps to ride their sleds and car hoods down the two-mile thrilling ride to the bottom of the mountain. While I recall a few injuries, it was an unbelievable ride going about 40 mph on a sled only 6" above the road surface. Wow!

#### Q. Can you still ride a sled down Richard Russell Highway in the winter?

A. Eventually, USFS

stopped vehicles from going up on the mountain during bad weather, but it was a blast back in the day. However, rarely is there enough snow or ice on this road for sledding now - even if it were allowed.

#### Q. Was there another major winter weather event you recall from growing up here?

A. Oh yes!! It was the Blizzard of '93. On March 13th, 1993, it snowed 28" and more in some areas, which was the largest snow event anyone can remember. There was another snow storm in 1941 (way before I was born), when it snowed 20".

I remember that we had about 15 people from the neighborhood sleeping in our house for a few days because we had gas heat and gas hot water. Electricity was out in the county for 7 days to 10 days and longer in the remote areas. However, our telephone never quit working.

I also remember the story of Major Leon Davenport, our hospital administrator, walking to work from his home about 3 miles to the hospital in two feet of snow, to assist his staff who could not leave the hospital.

### Clyde... continued from Page 4A

framework outlines common-sense budget measures, including cutting current spending by ending numerous policies enacted by the Biden Administration and capping future discretionary spending at the Fiscal Year 2022 level over the next decade, while allowing for 1% annual growth. Our plan will cut over \$130 billion in Fiscal Year 2024 funding and save roughly \$3 trillion over the long term by eliminating woke, wasteful, and wea-

pomized federal bureaucracy spending. For example, we propose restoring Clinton-era work requirements on welfare programs and unleashing domestic energy production by ending federal regulations and subsidies. As discussions move forward in the coming weeks, please know that I remain committed to restoring fiscal sanity in Washington and refuse to consider raising the debt ceiling without making significant spending reforms.

### Cummings...continued from Page 4A

front of his house. He was afraid a cut bank would pose a danger for him and his wife as they grew older. The man from the Alabama Highway Department agreed. However, when the road was built a steep bank was created which caused Lon to climb down and back up to retrieve his mail. The people constructing the road laughed when Lon asked them to level up the bank.

A few miles down the road lived his older brother Will Cummings. Within a few weeks after the incident with Lon the Road Construction crew reached Will's house. Once again a man appeared at his door to ask about a road right of way. Will went through the same negotiations as his brother and was promised the same thing as Lon. Finally, the construction began at Will's place. When the dozer began cutting down the bank in front of his house he took matters into his own hands. He raised up his old rifle and began shooting at the dozer. The

operator ran for his life as the muffler of the dozer was shot away. The foreman of the crew tried to negotiate, but, Will refused to talk to him.

Finally, the Superintendent of Roads for the State of Alabama made the trip from Montgomery to Trapptown, Alabama. Before visiting Uncle Will the fellow stopped at the store above Cummings Creek and asked, "What kind of man is Will Cummings?" The storeowner replied, "He is honest. If he tells you he will do something then count it done." The Superintendent visited with Uncle Will which demanded that the hill in front of his house not be cut because it would create a bank that would be hard for him to climb up and down as he aged. He further stated, "Any man that tries to cut down that hill will be shot." The road in front of Will Cummings' house was built over the hill in front of his house and there is still not a road bank there even today. Uncle Will was a "real char'acter."

### Thompson... continued from Page 4A

from the inside out, schools, changing the way you think or talk, indoctrinating your children at an early age. Free stuff so you don't want to work. Electric cars and trucks that the average person couldn't afford. Controlling what you buy. And down the road your banking accounts. They can print all the money they want, but it is worthless.

You think inflation is

### Narcotics

#### Anonymous group

Narcotics Anonymous has relocated in Blairsville! The "Hardcore Hope" group now meets on Tuesday and Thursday through Sunday at 6 PM at 75 Hunt-Martin Street, Blairsville, GA If you think that drugs are a problem in your life, come see if we can help! For further information about Narcotics Anonymous, please call the NA Help Line at 1-888-947-7262.

high now, wait until they get Biden's budget bill passed; over \$6 trillion more, that's all, just print it. Then you'll really see how high inflation can go. The low and middle classes and small businesses will be unable to meet their obligations, and they will blame those that voted no. This is insane, and it's time that the government learns to make sacrifices like the American people are having to make. Time will tell. This is not sustainable, and our enemies are watching. We are now an extension of America, and once we lose our freedom, we will never get it back. We have already lost so much. History repeats itself. We the people let this happen. This falls on us. We were not strong enough to stand up for our rights, prayer in school, the Ten Commandments, Pledge of Allegiance. Maybe this is our children's future. God only knows what our future holds.

**Charlotte Thompson**

### Dyer...

continued from Page 4A

Everyone who burns hand-piled leaves or yard debris should research the law and outdoor burning safety requirements. For more information about outdoor burning and the five safety precautions, please visit [www.gatrees.org](http://www.gatrees.org).

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

### Fowler...

continued from Page 4A

learn the repentant life is far more likely than a perfect one.

"Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame" (1 Pet. 3:15-16).

### Williams...

continued from Page 4A

Historically, in the southern US, wildfires would burn parts of the landscape every 1 to 3 years. Now in the southeast it's estimated that 4% of lands that could be burned are in a burn rotation. With the development that we have now it's a good thing that we don't have wildfires raging through the southeast every 1 to 3 years. Controlled burns are able to keep the fuel load in the forest down to prevent that from happening. But if we don't have enough controlled burns or responsible timber harvest from public lands then we won't see the rejuvenation of the forest necessary for it to sustain a diverse group of species for generation after generation.

If you have questions about controlled burns you can contact the Georgia Forestry Commission, the US Forest Service, or email me at [Jacob.Williams@uga.edu](mailto:Jacob.Williams@uga.edu).

### Chamber...

continued from Page 4A

8 a.m. in Granddaddy Mimm's Distilling Co. parking lot for instructions. The group with the most trash collected wins! First place prize will be \$1,000 while second and third places will receive \$500 and \$250, respectively. All winnings will be paid in Blairsville Bucks. There will be free hamburgers and hotdogs at noon for those participating. To help us get a good head count for lunch, please register your team by calling the Chamber.

Help us make Life Cleaner in Blairsville!

### Lausier...

continued from Page 4A

way he treats the people in public meetings is a clear signal that he needs to go.

But are you serious? Replacing one commissioner with five, how is that improving our county function? When have you ever been able to get five people to fully agree on anything?

If you don't like what Mr. Lamar is doing, then get a petition to have a recall election. If there is no provision for a recall election in the county now, then demand an amendment to the county rules to have a recall provision.

Don't throw out a working commissioner framework, for a complete illogical and bureaucratic mess that five commissioners would bring. I have lived in two counties in Georgia that had a lovely working government until they started adding commissioners. The created mess was so awful with rezoning, subdivisions everywhere, traffic jams, poor schools, and nobody was accountable for anything. I had to move.

Trying to talk to these petition people is like trying to nail jello to a wall, they are unable to hear the truth and see the mess they are advocating.

More government, less accountability, more bureaucracy, that's NOT CONSERVATIVE. You are misnamed, maybe rename yourselves... hmmm... Citizens for Chaos.

**Eva Lausier**

### UC Historical Society's Brick Walk

The Union County Historical Society is still running a special price of \$50 on Memorial Bricks. These bricks make great gifts to honor someone or a memorial for loved ones. We also have bell ringings for celebration of special occasions and memorials at cost \$50 each. For more information contact the Union County Historical Society at 706-745-5493.