

Telecommunicators Week

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week - During the week of April 14th through the 20th, the Union County 911 Center is celebrating National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



When an emergency strikes, people want to know that they can call for help. They want someone to answer the call. That someone is a Public Safety Telecommunicator, more commonly known as a 911 dispatcher.

Being a 911 dispatcher is one of the most unique jobs in public safety. They answer the emergency call, determine the nature of the emergency, determine who or what should be sent to the emergency, dispatch units to the scene, and record everything in the computer-aided dispatch system.

911 dispatchers are experts at staying calm and keeping the caller calm. They are also skilled in gaining information from excited or even frantic callers who, at times, provide limited information.

The 911 dispatcher is one of the most unsung heroes of public safety. They are the initial point where the emergency is received and communicated. They are the calm voice on the phone when someone calls 911 on what could be the worst day of that person's life.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

True Friendship

When you can take off your shoes and prop your feet on a stool in a friend's home without your friend having a hissy fit, you are probably in the company of a special person in your life.

Successful Mental Health

Dr. James Ray Ashurst PH.D.



Without any attachments of tension or chaos. The relaxation is a dominant feeling between friends who are in a close relationship.

See Ashurst, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Election Respect

I know that these facts will not dent the armor of the twisted facts group, but here goes. I have tried in vain to bring facts face to face with people in direct conversations about the 2020 election, but facts don't matter to them - their blind ideology does matter.

The complete irrelevance of citing the popular vote feeds into the leftist narrative of getting rid of the Electoral College, which is a brilliant safeguard from our founders against mob rule.

See Lausier, page 5A

Meaningless Propaganda

An Op/Ed writer chimed in last week on the importance of us respecting our Democracy & Elections. First of all, I'd like to clear something up to the writer. We do not live in a Democracy. Democracy is Mob Rule.

Secondly, the writer goes on to outright lie when they cite this. "President Trump won the Electoral vote with 304 to Hillary Clinton's 227, but Hillary conceded the election in a timely and dignified manner."

All you have to do to see it, again, is to go to YouTube and search for it. When you make a concession speech and then go on to call your opponent "illegitimate" as many times as she has, even up to present day, THAT'S not dignified.

See Rains, page 5A

Your Story

Chris Coghlan was 15 when it happened. It was 2001. He had just finished exams for his sophomore year. He arrived home to a gathering of cars and people. He stepped inside, joking about a party in his honor. Then he saw his mom's face. His dad had been killed in a head-on collision.

Coghlan was overcome with anger and grief. His mom called Randy Holland and Roy Silver. Coghlan had been attending their Christian-based baseball academy in Clearwater, FL. They canceled training for the day and rushed to the Coghlan home. Over the ensuing years, they were father figures to the young man.

Baseball became Coghlan's coping mechanism. He would practice late into the evening to avoid the depressing effect of going home. The extra work paid off. He received a baseball scholarship from Ole Miss, where he earned All-SEC honors. But he was ignoring the values his dad had taught him. "I could do whatever I wanted," he said, "because I had the best excuse."

He was a first-round pick of the Florida Marlins. When they called him up from the minors, he only lasted one day in big league training camp. He partied hard the night before, and it showed. Being sent down "is an empty feeling," he said. "I was completely selfish."

Back at minor league camp, he noticed Darren Roberts reading the Bible in the clubhouse. They talked briefly. Later on the practice field, Roberts mystified Coghlan with an unusual gesture of kindness. After practice, the two men met for coffee. Roberts asked, "Are you a man of faith?" and explained what he meant. "By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). Coghlan explains what happened next. "I realized that I wanted Jesus in my life. I was tired of chasing the wind. I was trying to fill the void with baseball. I was a miserable person. After he shared that with me, I accepted Jesus Christ into my life."

God in His providence, foresees and uses the story of your life to reveal His love and care to you and others. "In your book were all written the days that were ordained for me" (Psa. 139:16). Your chapters may identify with Coghlan's tragedy, or Holland and

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

This week's questions and answers focus on Probate Court. Dawn Brackett serves as the Probate Judge, and Kristin Stainley serves as the Associate Probate Judge. These questions contain general information, and if you have further questions, you can call their office at (706) 439-6006, visit their website at www.unioncountygav.com/probate, or visit their office at 65 Courthouse Street, Blairsville.

Q. How do I get a marriage license?

A. To obtain a marriage license, both parties must appear in the Probate Judge's office to complete a written application, or they may submit an online application before coming in. Both parties must be at least 18 years of age and provide a form of identification. If either party has been married before, proof of the dissolution of the previous marriage is required. At least one application is a resident of Georgia, the parties may apply for their marriage license in any county in the state of Georgia. The cost is \$26.00 with a certificate of pre-marital education or \$66.00 without pre-marital education. The court accepts cash, local checks, money orders, and credit cards. More detailed information is available on the Probate Court website.

Q. Where can I get a copy of my marriage license?

A. Copies of marriage licenses must be obtained from the Probate Court in the county where the license was applied for. The cost is \$10.00 per certified copy.

Q. Where do I get a Georgia Weapons Carry License?

A. Probate Court handles the issuance of Weapons Carry Licenses in Georgia. The applicant must be at least 21 years of age, a resident of Union County, and must provide a picture ID with a physical address. If the ID has a P.O. Box, the applicant must provide proof of their physical address. New applicants must submit a written or online application with Probate Court, and then submit to a fingerprint-based background check at the Union County Jail. The fee for new applicants is \$78.25. The license is valid for 5 years. Renewal applications can be made within 90 days prior or up to 30 days after the expiration date of the license. The renewal fee is \$30.00.

Q. How do I get a certified copy of my birth certificate?

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Chamber of Commerce

What is workforce housing and why do we need it in Union County? Local businesses will now tell you that they have adequate staffing to operate but they are still not fully staffed. A number of teachers drive over an hour each way due to lack of local housing. Our manufacturing firms would like to expand or add additional shifts but cannot attract middle level managers because they cannot find housing. The number of our labor force that lives outside the county that commute each day continues to grow. Everyone knows someone with a family member living with them until they can find housing. Or, who has a neighbor or friend that would like to downsize but has no place to relocate.

Workforce housing can take many forms. During a recent conversation I heard it said that we need next-step housing. This would be housing for recent graduates that would like to return to Blairsville or the family that is growing

See Chamber, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



Letters to the Editor

Unfair Non-Debate

Dear Editor, Did you know that a candidate was denied the opportunity to speak at the GOP candidate forum?

Dick Mills, who actually sponsored the event, was denied the opportunity to address those present, as well as all those watching the live feed in Union, Towns and White County.

Stan Gunter, who Dick would debate, did not show. As result, Dick Mills was not allowed to speak.

The local GOP was happy to take Dick's money but then denied him the opportunity to speak.

Disgusting. The decision as to who will receive my vote is now very simple. Jerry O'Connell

Re: "Democrat Party"

Dear Editor, Yes, more than ever, I am proud to be a lifelong Democrat. My mother and my father both were Democrats. He was also a Marine who fought and died in World War II to defend Democracy and the rule of law. I am offended by your portrayal of the Democratic Party and the misinformation that you included.

I can assure you that the Democratic Party does not espouse abortion on demand at eight or nine months. That isn't a thing, except in the imaginations of anti-abortion activists. I believe that abortion is health care between a woman and her doctor. Period. I do believe in government-funded child care, pre-K for all children, meal subsidies for children in need and the freedom for children to be able to go to school and not have to

See Maloney, page 5A

Got Mail?

Dear Editor, If you are one of the many in our area having trouble getting your U.S. mail on time like I am, I suggest you call our State Representative Stan Gunter. His office number in Atlanta is 404-656-5125. Joan Moody

Hiwassee Brew's Best Beer

Dear Editor, Movers & Shakers is known for letting the community know what is happening in the local mountain area. Well, what is happening in Hiwassee is that Hiwassee Brew, located at 616 S. Main Street in Hiwassee, is selling a premium pilsner and donating to Animal Rescue Financial

See Scott, page 5A

Things We Take For Granted

We all have things in life that we take for granted. These items have always been around, and we assume they will always be around. For example, I remember a little school house I attended. It was the same school my Dad attended as a boy. My second-grade teacher was my Grandfather's cousin. When she called me by both my first and second name I knew I was in trouble. I have a lot of fond memories of that school house, and now it is in a state of decay.

I remember a little white church house where the only means of keeping cool were two ceiling fans and opening the windows. I remember dinners on the ground and all-day singings. I remember going to singing schools and revival meetings. At that time, there was only one generation of Cummings buried at the cemetery. Now, the church is a brick building with central air and heat and there are three generations of my relatives buried in the cemetery.

I also remember people like my Granny, a person that loved life and loved being outside. But, she had a temper. While walking through their property one time she came upon a man trying to steal timber from her and Papa. When she confronted him the man laughed at her. She quietly walked back to the old road where she left their truck parked and retrieved her double-barreled shotgun. She walked back to the sound of the sawing on her property. The man was just finishing up cutting a nice White Oak when he came face to face with the business end of her gun. This second time I believe the fellow understood that my grandmother meant business because he left and ended up giving my grandparents a nice cash settlement for the timber he'd stolen.

On another occasion I was visiting and Granny wanted to watch Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant wrestle on the TV. While they were "rattling" as she put it, I began to make fun of the sport and trying to explain it was all fake. She soon turned to me and stated, "I would like to see you get out there. Them two fellers would beat the *##* out of you." She soon added, "Now, look what you made me say." She believed that "rattling" was real but she didn't believe that Neal Armstrong walked on the moon. She told me that he'd been walking around in the desert at night.

My Dad is another person I remember. As you may know he was a minister and would do whatever it took to convince a person that they needed to accept Jesus as their Saviour. One evening he was talking to a fellow and asked him what it would take for him to come to church.

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Blooming Trees

Oftentimes when we talk about pollinator plants we think of annual flowers or shrubs that produce a lot of blooms, but if you have the space there are some trees that have spectacular blooms and are beneficial to pollinators. A lot of these trees bloom early in the year, which is a good thing. Many of the other pollinator plants are not flowering yet early in the spring and these trees provide a crucial food source for our pollinators.

Let's start with poplar trees. They are not always thought of as pollinator plants, but they contain a lot of nectar and pollen. The blooms are high up in the tree. They also have green petals with an orange band. This makes the flowers blend in with the rest of the tree and hard to see. Poplars are usually among the first hardwoods to start growing after an area has been cleared. Because of this you'll sometimes see a lot of them growing together. Some people don't care for them, because they are so abundant, but don't forget about their value to pollinators.

Dogwoods are very common, but there are several different species of them. Cornus florida is one of our native dogwoods. The wild ones tend to have smaller blooms than cultivars you buy commercially. Kousa dogwoods have large attractive flowers, and they tend to bloom a bit later than our native dogwoods. Silky dogwood is a beautiful native dogwood that has small blooms, but in large clusters. They also make great trees for planting along streambank or wet spots because they like wet soil. You may hear old timers talk about dogwood winter. This refers to when we have a cold snap while dogwoods are blooming. Blackberry winter comes after dogwood winter, if you have a cold snap while blackberries are blooming.

Redbuds are another common flowering tree. Their blooms are a bit more lavender than red in my opinion. I think that redbuds blooming in conjunction with dogwoods are beautiful. The parking lot at the Mountain Fairgrounds are a great example of that. Some people don't like redbuds because they do tend to drop a lot of branches. But when they are in full bloom you can hear the tree buzzing with bees.

Black Cherry is our wild cherry tree. These blooms are small and white. They produce small fruit in the summer that wildlife can use, but they are so small they are not great for human consumption. It is a host plant for the tiger swallowtail, which is our Georgia state butterfly.

American fringetree is not nearly as common as any of these other trees but it is one of my favorites. The flowers have long lace like petals.

See Williams, page 5A

Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West Publisher/Owner Shawn Jarrard General Manager/Editor Derek Richards Advertising Director Todd Forrest Sports Editor Lowell Nicholson 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. The Probate Court is the vital records holder for Union County. Copies of birth and death certificates may be obtained for anyone born in the state of Georgia or for anyone who died in the state of Georgia. The first copy is \$25.00 and each additional copy of the same certificate is \$5.00. Additional information may be found on the Probate Court website under Vital Records.

Q. If I was born in a state other than Georgia, can the Probate Court provide me with a copy of my birth certificate?

A. No, the Probate Court only has access to records for births and deaths that occur within Georgia.

Q. Where do I pay a traffic ticket?

A. If you received a traf-

fic ticket or a game and fish citation in Union County, the ticket will most likely be handled in Probate Court. However, if the citation was issued in the city limits of Blairsville, it will be handled by the Blairsville Municipal Court. The court and the court date will be listed on the citation.

Q. What other things does the Probate Court handle?

A. The Probate Court handles estates such as administrations, years supports, and the probating of wills, guardianships of minors and adults, mental health issues, fireworks display permits, houses copies of the legal organ of Union County, and many other miscellaneous duties such as residency certificates, veterans exemption certificates, and cattle brand registrations.

Ashurst... continued from Page 4A

lifting challenges. All of these are important and what we need from day-to-day to keep us alert, sharp, and empathetic towards others.

We all experience disheartening situations at times in our lives from our chaotic and stressful society. Thus, having genuine friends can enable us to see the sunshine behind the murky clouds of despair, hopelessness, and depression. Because each of us has such days, our relationship with our friends can deliver us to a mentally and emotionally safe spot of comfort and of peace. Our arena can become quite desolate and lonely if we have isolated ourselves away from the loving-kindness and genuine love of a friend.

Because friendships are based on our human needs, there will be misunderstandings at times. However, if the relationship is real and valid, we will figure out what happened, apologize if we were in the wrong and re-establish the relationship – and keep moving forward, hand-in-hand with

our friend. The key element is to figure out what caused the misunderstanding and attempt to “fix it” as soon as possible. All friendships can be restored if the individuals want to restore them. Mentally and emotionally healthy individuals are neither controllers nor victims in a genuine friendship.

The real test of a genuine friendship is if you can make an emergency call freely to your friend at 1 a.m. or even later. It is a true evaluation of the caliber of an honest-to-goodness friendship. I wouldn’t recommend such being done on a regular basis. However, there are times when our world seems to be falling apart, there is a need to talk or to make a visit becomes reasonable, hopefully at a decent hour.

If your friend is Johnny-on-the-spot at that time with you, then be certain to nurture that relationship, because it is as precious as a valuable gem.

“True friendship comes when the silence between two people is comfortable.”
(David Tyson)

Rains... continued from Page 4A

mocracy” & Elections.

This is even a problem in our own state. As most recall, Stacey Abrams still believes she won her election against Brian Kemp. Don’t believe me? Go to your preferred search engine and type in “Stacey Abrams refuses to call Brian Kemp the legitimate Gov. of Georgia.”

I find it strange that when Democrats win elections under suspicious circumstances that we conservatives are just supposed to shut and take it, but if the opposite happens, Democrats are allowed to say whatever they want to say regardless of the truth. I was taught “what’s sauce for the goose, is sauce for the gander.” In other words, if Democrats have the right to call President Trump illegitimate, then we

have the right to call Joe Biden illegitimate, and from the job his administration has done to date, it shows.

Our country has never been in more dire straits. The truth about this is simple. Democrats are the ones who have no respect for our country or our elections, and they prove that fact almost each and every time they open their mouths.

Finally, I say this to the letter writer: Dear Op/Ed Writer, if you don’t know under which governmental system you live, perhaps it’s best you don’t comment on it at all seeing as your information was incorrect. At the very least you should do your homework so you don’t come off as someone just trying to spread meaningless propaganda.

Claude Rains Jr.

Maloney... continued from Page 4A

worry about getting shot.

What does Marxist mean? According to the dictionary, Marxist is a philosophy that is concerned about the consequences of a society divided by the elite class and the working class. It never took hold in our country and is outdated as a discussion point.

Yes, I believe in climate change. Look at the weather across our country just in the past year: tornadoes, hurricanes, rising sea levels and melting Arctic ice. Last year’s temps were the highest on record. It’s real whether you buy into it or not. Our children deserve for us to act.

President Biden has been the subject of numerous inquiries into his past behavior. Nothing of substance has been found. That’s the reason he is not actively being investigated. Mr. Trump has been found legally responsible for numerous transgressions. The rule of law is alive and well.

I suspect you refer to grocery prices when you say you are not better off now than before. The pandemic created many challenges for all of us that were unprecedented. But those are easing off. The exorbitant prices during the pandemic were understandable because of supply chain issues. Those issues have calmed down, but it’s becoming evident that prices remain high and that those high prices are benefiting those at the top at the expense of the rest of us. Presidents don’t have much control over business executives who manage to live very well at the expense of the rest of us.

Vaccines! Oh my, how many people died before we had them? The folks I know were grateful and benefited from them. There are probably those who had negative reactions but on the enormous scale that we were experienc-

ing, that was inevitable though tragic. We were dealing with a pandemic of unknown proportion. Be careful when you accuse folks of lying and cheating to achieve a goal. As you said in your letter: “I will leave the research to the professional class to break that down.”

Immigration. We are a country of immigrants. As in all populations, there may be those whose ulterior motives might be suspect. But that is true of our own citizens. Imagine, please, walking, struggling for days, weeks over miles and miles without decent food or shelter. Things at home must be pretty bad to take that journey. We’re lucky to have immigrants. They pick our crops, take care of our kids, clean our houses, build our infrastructure, and believe with passion in our form of government. Have some compassion for fellow human beings.

Lastly, my cousin is transgender. He was born John and spent his life trying to be John. He married, had children and then with the blessing of those who loved him, became Heather, who he was all along. Trust me, that was not a choice. You mentioned the issue of trans kids playing sports – there are ways to address that issue without demonizing people. You might check out a PFLAG meeting. There are brilliant people there who will help you understand.

Yes, I am proud to be a Democrat. I am an avid supporter of President Biden. He is smart, kind and with a background for governing that is unprecedented. He is surrounded by those who believe in this country and want the best for all of us, not just his cronies. What is happening in this country is not wrong, and I would suggest that you explore other points of view. They could be eye-opening.

Michelle Maloney

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

The man laughed and said, “I’d come if I got a good dose of the cancer.” Dad shook his head and turned to leave. When asked where he was going, he responded, “I am going to pray that God gives you the cancer.” The fellow begged him not to pray that prayer and promised to come to church. He eventually accepted Jesus and became a preacher himself.

A few years ago I took Dad to Athens to watch the DAWGS play. Dad could not walk far due to a bad foot, so I left him at the arches and drove about a mile away to park my truck. Before I left I cautioned him to wait on me until I came back. After jogging back to meet him at the arches I stopped to catch my breath and asked him if he was OK. He responded, “I am OK, but there was a little incident.” He further explained that two inebriated men bumped into one another and almost came to blows. And of course Dad intervened and told the largest fellow that he needed to leave the smaller man alone because Dad’s boss would not like it if the smaller man was harmed. The man asked, “Who is your boss?” Dad told him his boss was God and that he was a preacher. The man turned and walked away.

A couple of years ago I went to Dad’s house late one evening. He was watching a show where men dressed up like women. To be perfectly honest I was shocked and asked him what he was watching. He explained that this show was

some type of beauty contest and some of those women were actually pretty good looking. So, I explained that this was some kind of show about drag queens and those women were actually men dressed like women. Dad hung his head for a minute and then looked up at me to say, “Boy, if you ever tell anyone I watched this, I will cut you out of my will.” Shortly thereafter, he went to the eye doctor to see about getting his eyes checked.

Do not think I am making fun of my relatives. My Granny and Daddy were larger than life to me. Granny was as tough as any man and yet she loved me and my cousins very much. She spent time with us when other adults could not. And Dad was a man of great faith that loved everyone and wanted them to spend eternity with him. And he loved life and would pull a good one on you if you let him. I miss them terribly and wish I could spend another minute with both of these people. Take it from me: Do not take your loved ones for granted.

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

and needs more room. Or, as we mentioned, the couple that would like to downsize and needs that place to stay while they build that dream home. It could also provide housing for that new teacher, health care worker, or manager until they could find or build something.

Workforce housing can be affordable without being what many refer to as affordable or subsidized housing. As the supply of market value housing increases, both permanent and temporary housing should be more affordable and available.

We will continue to explore options for housing and childcare to help provide our workforce with the resources they need to live, work and play in our community.

We can all work together to make life better in Blairsville.

Williams... continued from Page 4A

This tree does have male and female plants. Both male and female have flowers, but the males tend to be showier. When the tree is in full bloom the white flowers almost look like little clouds caught in the tree. They are not large trees, as they don’t grow more than 20 feet. There is also a Chinese fringetree that looks very similar.

If you have questions about blooming trees contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Fowler... continued from Page 4A

Silver’s caregiving. Another may look like Roberts, having spiritual conversations.

Coghlan was rookie of the year in 2009. His Cubs won the world series in 2016. He married and they adopted a son. He still lives his story of resilience and faith. “Even though some things happen in a negative way or life is tough on a person,” he said, “we know through the promise of God that it is for our good and His glory.”

That’s Chris Coghlan’s story. What’s yours?

Scott... continued from Page 4A

Support (ARFS) at the same time.

I tried the new ARFS beer last week, and it is truly the best beer I have ever had. With every purchase of an ARFS beer, Hiawassee Brew will donate 50 cents to help needy animals in Towns, Clay, Cherokee, and Union counties.

ARFS especially helps animals that need medical care, but their owners cannot afford the vet expenses. If you are not familiar with Animal Rescue Financial Support, you need to check out its website at arfs-inc.org.

And if you haven’t tried the very exceptional ARFS beer, you need to head to Hiawassee Brew and ask for an “ARFS beer.” Purchasing an ARFS beer is a win-win for both you and for homeless, hungry and hurting animals.

William “Scotty” Scott Movers & Shakers

Lausier... continued from Page 4A

lie. Hillary still whines that her election was stolen and blames everyone else for her failure.

After four years of research and investigation, it has been proven that the 2020 election was riddled with fraud.

In this state alone, it is proven that 300,000 votes are fraudulent. In Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, there were thousands of fraudulent votes that investigations have found.

The current secretary of state of Georgia claims that he did an audit on Georgia’s votes, and yet, to date, no au-

dit has been found. So he lied to Congress and to the nation, swinging the fraudulent election to Biden.

The Dominion machines in a court case just a few weeks ago were found to be so easily hacked that someone could do it with a ballpoint pen.

So don’t make me laugh when you say may all political candidates show respect for America, and the people’s decisions. Try telling that to the Democrat Party who are steeped in some of the most extreme positions I have ever seen.

Eva Lausier