

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Fire Department Medical Training

The role of the fire department has changed over the years. In the past, the fire department only responded to fires. Over the years, the fire department has turned into "emergency services" and responds to all types of emergencies including fires, motor vehicle accidents, hazardous materials, searches, rescues, medical calls, and many others. A firefighter must be a jack-of-all-trades and know how to respond to these emergencies.

Medical calls make up about 60%-65% of the total responses. These are usually major medical emergencies such as a heart attack, stroke, trauma, seizure, or an unresponsive patient. The department responds to assist Union General Ambulance Service on these major medical incidents. The firefighters responding to these medical calls must have medical training and be licensed as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) by the State of Georgia.

There are several levels of EMT licenses in Georgia. The initial level is the Emergency Medical Technician - Responder (EMT-R). This level was previously known as the First Responder. The EMT-R is capable of providing patient assessments and basic first aid. The next level is the Emergency Medical Technician - Basic or EMT-B. This level includes more training on assessment, airway management and treatment.

The Emergency Medical Technician - Intermediate (EMT-I) and Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) are considered midlevel certifications and include more advanced training than EMT-B, such as treatment with IVs and medications. The Paramedic level is the highest pre-hospital license. They are certified to perform more advanced life-support assessments and procedures than all other levels. The differences in each level are too elaborate to be explained in this column.

There are several volunteer firefighters throughout the county who are licensed at one of these levels. The EMT-B is the minimum level of medical training required by UCFD to be a career firefighter. However, some have obtained a license as an EMT-I, AEMT, and/or Paramedic. The classes for these certifications can range from six months to a year.

Having medically trained and licensed firefighters responding to medical calls is an essential part of the services provided by

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Grace Pictures #1

Jim Caviezel stars in the recently released movie, "Sound of Freedom." It is the story of Tim Ballard, who quit his job to rescue children from global sex traffickers. Ballard founded Operation Underground Railroad to further that cause. Worldwide trafficking is a growing \$15B market. Ballard's operation has set free over 6,000 captives.

The true story of a victim held against her will then set free makes for a powerful movie. It is also a picture of God's grace. The captive who yearns for freedom, which is beyond her grasp, can only hope that someone with power and compassion comes to deliver her once and for all. Christ Jesus is that Rescuer who came to set you free.

Jesus quoted Isaiah to explain His purpose. "He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives... To set free those who are oppressed," He said. "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:18,21). He proved the point by setting people free from the physical pain of hunger, disease and death. After telling an invalid man his sins are forgiven, Jesus sets him free from paralysis as visible evidence he could do both (Mark 2). He also set people free from blind adherence to empty religious rituals and demeaning attitudes toward women and minorities.

Jesus offers to set you free from the human condition, saying, "Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die" (John 11:26). The answers to questions about life, meaning and destiny are not locked away in some agnostic mystery. They are revealed not in the darkness of godlessness, or the limited light of scientific inquiry. You find them in the Truth that sets you free (John 8:32).

The liberty found in Christ means release from the blindness that keeps you from seeing your own captivity, and from the hopelessness that keeps you from embracing your own rescue. Your walk through the open prison door begins with faith in Christ and continues by trusting Him to lead you in the paths of righteousness. "It was for freedom that Christ set us free," Paul writes. "Therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1).

Caviezel's movie depicts the rescuers bursting down a

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. What are the main functions of the Union County Fire Department? Do they only fight fires?

A. Many people do not realize the broad impact that firefighters have on various types of emergencies in Union County. The fire department's main responsibility is fighting fire; however, firefighters are called upon for a wide range of emergency situations. You will find them at emergency medical calls, all motor vehicle accidents, hazardous materials incidents, Appalachian trail, river rescues, and mountain hiker searches, and every type of rescue imaginable. Firefighters also have related duties such as training, teaching fire prevention, smoke alarm installations, and equipment maintenance to ensure that the stations, equipment, and apparatus are ready to respond at a moment's notice.

Q. What is the difference between the UC Fire Dept vs Emergency Medical Services (EMS-Union General Hospital)?

A. Union County Fire Department is a county department responsible for fighting fire and the other duties listed above. The Emergency Medical Services (EMS), also known as the ambulance service, is operated by Union General Hospital. They respond to all medical calls and are responsible for pre-hospital care for residents and visitors of Union County. As a matter of fact, many people do not realize that of the 3,500 + ambulance emergency calls annually, the Fire Department assists in 1500-1800 of those calls. This includes the treatment and transport of patients.

Q. We hear the term EMA, EMS related to emergency services. Can you explain what the differences are?

A. The EMA is the abbreviation of the Emergency Management Agency. The EMS is the Emergency Medical Services. The EMS is the Union General Hospital ambulance service. The EMA is the organization responsible for the coordinated response of the county resources to natural and manmade disasters. Duties include planning for such emergencies as natural weather events such as flooding, tornadoes, and hurricanes, as well as man-made events such as forest fires, terrorist events, and hazardous material releases. It involves preventing, preparing, mitigating, responding, and recovering from these disasters. The EMA is very im-

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Major SCOTUS Wins

Last month during the final days of the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022-2023 term, our nation received numerous landmark rulings that have profound impacts on the future of our Republic. Given the significance of four crucial decisions, I wanted to share my thoughts on these major judicial wins with you.

Religious Freedom & Free Speech

In two separate cases, the U.S. Supreme Court delivered tremendous victories for Americans' religious liberty and freedom of speech. The first decision unanimously ruled in favor of a Pennsylvania postal worker who refused to work on Sundays because of his faith. Additionally, in a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Colorado graphic designer who refused to create wedding websites for same-sex couples due to her religious objections.

These two rulings remind me of June

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United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde



Chamber of Commerce

It's time again for our 2023 Leadership Union, and we are so excited about the activities planned for this year's class. For those that are not familiar with Leadership Union, it is a program sponsored by the Chamber that helps in developing leaders in Union County by providing educational and thought-provoking sessions. Many past participants have developed contacts through the event that have become life-long professional connections.

Applications are available for Chamber businesses and their employees by contacting Terri at 706-745-5789 or Terri@Blairsvillechamber.com. Applications must be received by July 25th, from which this year's class of 20 participants will be selected. If selected, a fee of \$350 is due by August 4th.

It is always interesting to speak to participants and to hear them tell of what they learned about Union County that even some lifelong residents were unaware of. There will be an oppor-

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



Letters to the Editor

Re: "Supreme Court Reform"

Dear Editor,
So I haven't written an Op/Ed in quite some time. Frankly, others have been doing a very good job of refuting a lot of the liberal lunacy that I've seen lately. That being said, after the Op/ed I read last week entitled "Fight for Supreme Court Reform," I thought I had to say something.

The author of that Op/Ed, believing that she and others have lost their rights due to some of the latest rulings by the court, tells us that our highest court has been corrupted by conservative bias. One has to love the idiocy of someone passionately decrying the court because women

See Rains, page 5A

Satan Is Real

Dear Editor,
Once a beautiful angel was created by God with free will just like we have here on earth. But this angel called Lucifer wanted to be like God, so he and a third of the angels were cast out of heaven down to earth, and thus the name Satan was given to him, also called the prince of the air we breathe. Satan has never been in hell and has never seen hell but knows this time is short, because when Christ returns, Satan and all of his demons will be cast into

See Combs, page 5A

Eat Mor Chikin

Dear Editor,
In last week's edition of this paper, a letter writer suggested that although Chick-fil-A was founded on Christian principles (including honoring the Sabbath as prescribed in the Book of Exodus) the restaurant chain is apparently not Christian enough to be worthy of his patronage. Actually, the writer encouraged a boycott of the restaurant. His expressed concern had to do with some charities that the enterprise has decided

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Open Letter to Andrew Clyde

Mr. Clyde,
I wonder what problems and issues you could focus on in our local legislative district - you know, the one you supposedly serve - instead of your weekly "bombshell" hyper-partisan conspiracy assessments and ramblings about literally anything you can find that's negative about President Biden and his family.

You're charged with advancing the betterment of Georgia District 09, not leading the babbling crusade against what you callously, rou-

See St. Lawrence, page 5A

Time Awareness - Part II

No one can predict how much time we have on earth, but the exciting thing is that we are alive right now. Each day is a blessing and can only be seen as such when we respect time and use it effectively. We simply do not have "the time" to waste and to be ingrates. Each day is given to us as a gift from God. It is true that not everybody's makeup is geared towards a structured, scheduled lifestyle. Some of us seem to do much better by being spontaneous and highly flexible. Time takes on the personality we give it, and there is absolutely no reason that it can't be utilized effectively, in a wholesome way. Time, in and of itself, was never meant to be a cause of anxiety and madness. We humans are the barometers of our personal time management - it can be our friend or our enemy. You and I have the ability and privilege to Stop allowing time making us a victim. We have the internal power to be in charge of the way in which we manage our personal time.

John Wayne said the following about the element of time: "Tomorrow is the most important thing in life. Comes unto us at midnight very clean. It's perfect when it arrives, and it puts itself in our hands. It hopes we've learned something from yesterday."

I like what Gerald B. Klein says about Today: "Today is here. I will start with a smile and resolve to be agreeable. I will not criticize. I refuse to waste my valuable time."

"Today is one thing I am equal with all others - time. All of us draw the same salary in seconds, minutes, and hours."

"Today I will not waste my time because the minutes I wasted yesterday are as lost as a vanished thought."

"Today I refuse to spend time worrying about what might happen - it usually doesn't. I am going to spend time making things happen."

"Today I will not imagine what I would do if things were different. They are not different. I will make success with what material I have."

"Today I will stop saying 'If I had time -' I know I never will 'find time' for anything. If I want time, I must make it."

"Today I will act towards other people as though this might be my last day on earth. I will not wait for tomorrow. Tomorrow never comes."

Suggestions: Keep a daily schedule of your use of time, and at the close of each day, analyze it.

Purchase books on the "how to" use time successfully.

Go over your schedule with a close friend

See Ashurst, page 5A

Successful Mental Health

Dr. James Ray Ashurst PH. D.



Carolynn

My mother's younger sister is not that much older than I. She developed a great relationship with all of us kids because she was basically one of us. She let me drive her car down the road when I was only 11. She helped us kids build a dam across Baker Creek. She would tell us ghost stories late at night and listened to us complain about how our parents made us do chores and stuff. She loved to tell us jokes, and I never remember hearing her complain about anything.

As a teenager, Aunt Carolynn noticed how well-tanned all the actors were on the television. So, she decided to get a tan. She and Debra, her younger sister, decided to lie on top of the tin-roofed house of my mother's parents. As they lay on the roof soaking up that early spring sunlight, the girls felt so good they soon fell asleep. Well, you can guess the outcome of that situation. Aunt Carolynn and Aunt Debra were in a bad way for a few days. They never made that mistake again.

Aunt Carolynn found her calling as a young girl. Many of my grandmother's brothers and sisters had gathered at the oldest brother's house for a family get-together. Uncle Rufus and Aunt Euler lived up the road from my grandparents. Uncle Rufus raised cotton and corn on a nice little farm. He built himself a large catfish pond and the whole family was there to catch a mess of fish for a fish fry later in the day. There must've been 25-30 kids running around all over the place.

Most of the men and the older kids were down at the pond catching the evening meal. The ladies were up at the house sitting under a big shade tree talking about latest events in the little community. Uncle Rufus' house sat 4 feet off the ground on pillars of rock. Aunt Carolynn was about 6-7 years old and was playing with her younger cousin, Uncle Rufus and Aunt Euler's daughter. This young lady had beautiful, curly hair. She reminded the family of Shirley Temple.

The girls were playing up next to the house and began to talk of their dreams about growing up. Carolynn was placing ribbons in her younger cousin's hair and told the girl of her dreams about being a beautician. Carolynn said, "I bet I can fix your hair like a movie star." The little girl agreed, and so the two went into the house and gathered the supplies they would need. The girls walked under the floor of the house, and Carolynn wrapped a towel around the shoulders of her younger cousin and used a pair of scissors to cut the curls from her head while telling the latest news to her first customer.

After Carolynn finished, the pair ran out

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



American Chestnut

Many years ago, the Appalachian mountain range was covered in an estimated 4 billion American chestnut trees. These trees were a keystone species, providing important habitat and food for a wide range of wildlife. Chestnut wood is rot resistant and makes excellent timber. They were also the tallest trees in the Eastern US. They grew to over 100 feet tall and could have a trunk diameter of over 10 feet. Many farms would fatten cattle or pigs on chestnuts before taking them to sale. They truly were an integral part of our ecosystem. However, in the early 1900s an invasive blight began to spread and kill the American chestnuts. Today there are only a handful of chestnuts left that are bigger than a sapling. The loss of the American chestnut has had a profound effect on the Appalachian landscape. But, not all hope is lost! Using modern breeding techniques scientists are closer than ever to being able to replant the American chestnut. Let's talk about this amazing tree and what is being done to bring it back from extinction.

Chestnut trees that you see now are mostly likely Chinese chestnuts, or American-Chinese chestnut hybrids. These bloom in June. The Chinese chestnut trees have resistance to the blight, and the American chestnuts do not. Chinese chestnuts and Chinese hybrids do not have the same growth structure as American chestnuts. These trees don't grow as tall or straight, which makes their timber value considerably less. They also don't persist well in our forests.

There are breeding efforts to reduce the amount of Chinese genetics in hybrids, but still have a tree that has resistance to the blight. These conventional breeding programs take many years to produce a candidate. There has also been work done to genetically engineer American chestnuts to have blight resistance. This has been achieved by inserting a gene from wheat called oxalate oxidase. This gene is able to fight the fungus inside the tree, allowing the tree and the fungus to coexist. This gene was selected because it is safe to humans and wildlife. It is commonly found in the environment. This transgenic research has produced to closest to the form of the original wild American chestnut. The transgenic chestnut is called Darling 58.

As with any transgenic plant, it must go through rigorous testing before being released to the public. The FDA, USDA, and EPA must approve to deregulate the transgenic chestnuts, before they can be made publicly available. These government agencies are currently reviewing the Darling 58. If it becomes approved, there will

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UGA extension

Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



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Paris... continued from Page 4A

portant to the stability of any county in planning and recovery from disasters.

Q. How do public safety agencies get dispatched to emergency calls?

A. When you call the 911 to report an emergency, the call is processed by the dispatcher. The dispatcher determines the nature of the emergency and determines which units need to respond. The appropriate units (whether it be law enforcement, fire, or ambulance)

are dispatched on their dedicated digital radio frequencies. The dispatcher and responding units are in constant communication throughout the entire call – ensuring the responders are safe, updating the responding units on developments, and ensuring required resources are made available.

Union County Government is one of the few rural counties with a full-time fire department in conjunction with volunteer fire services.

Clyde... continued from Page 4A

24th, 2022 – when the Supreme Court rightfully overturned Roe v. Wade, because these decisions will have enormous impacts on our religious freedoms. No American should be forced to choose between their faith and their job, which is why it's so critically important that our nation's highest Court affirmed that our religious liberty and freedom of speech will always be protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

Equal Opportunity

As Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." On June 29, our nation took a monumental step toward that vital vision.

That Thursday, the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed that it is unconstitutional to consider race in university admissions, commonly known as affirmative action. In a 6-3 ruling, the Supreme Court argued affirmative action violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution's 14th Amendment. The decision came after the Court considered the admission practices of two well-known academic institutions: Harvard College and the University of North Carolina. Both schools, as with many universities across the country, claimed a minority applicant's race should improve their chances of admission. Thankfully, with the Supreme Court's landmark ruling, this unconstitutional practice is now recognized as unlawful – with the only carveout being military academies; more on that later.

I applaud the Supreme Court for its critical decision against affirmative action, as race-based criteria in any in-

stitution undoubtedly defies the 14th Amendment, unnecessarily sows division, and advances systemic discrimination. All students, no matter their physical characteristics, deserve an equal opportunity to obtain a higher education. In fact, all success in our nation must be measured by merit and content of character – not skin color.

Financial Responsibility

Additionally, in a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court struck down President Biden's unconstitutional student loan debt transfer scheme. As you know, the President's plan is not only illegal, as the executive branch does not have the authority to take such action, but it is also morally bankrupt. There is no "forgiving" or "canceling" more than \$400 billion in student loan debt; Joe Biden's measure would simply transfer the borrowers' burden to all taxpayers. It's indefensible, unacceptable, and unlawful to force Americans who didn't go to college, didn't have student loans, or already paid off their loans to foot this catastrophic bill. I'm thankful that fairness, commonsense, and the rule of law prevailed – delivering a huge win to American taxpayers and our economy.

I applaud the Supreme Court for issuing these victorious opinions, and I thank President Donald Trump for making these major judicial accomplishments possible. By appointing three constitutionalist justices to the bench, Trump made a historic impact on the Supreme Court and the future of our Republic.

Just like Dobbs, last week's incredible rulings bolster President Trump's first term legacy – marking pivotal decisions that will undoubtedly impact generations to come.

Rains... continued from Page 4A

can't conveniently kill their unborn babies as often as they'd like to. Abortion is a cop out. Liberals are all about the fun with no concern about the consequences. Here's a thought. Perhaps, if those women who rely so heavily on "abortion care," as she puts it, gave 10 minutes of thought to the consequences of sex, they could prepare for it. You know, contraception. We can't have that, though! No. According to her, it's your right to be completely unprepared for sex if you want to! My opinion is this: If you don't want to have a baby, then make sure you're prepared before sex! That being said, as far as referring to abortion as "abortion care," how is ripping a perfectly viable unborn child from a woman's womb to be considered "care" of any kind? It's not!

Abortion is nothing more than a convenience for women who are too careless and who can't take the time to be bothered by contraception. It has far-reaching consequences for the prospective mother as well as for the unborn children who survive it, and there are children who have survived abortion. The writer throws out a couple of other issues, but abortion was her main topic. Remember! She wants the Supreme Court to be turned over to the hands of liberals such as herself who KNOW the proper things to do. I find that both extremely funny and extremely sad, because one of the current liberal justices during her confirmation hearings couldn't even define what a woman was. Think about that for a while.

Claude Rains Jr.

Combs... continued from Page 4A

hell. Let me give you an example. Suppose I am standing beside a pool and three guys come charging at me to throw me into the pool. My next thought is to take as many of them with me as possible. Satan wants to take as many folks with him as possible, but he has to make up lies that seem

to be like the truth so people will join forces with him and go to hell instead of heaven. I tell you this so you don't fall into Satan's pit of no return, for once you are there, you can never leave. What a sad legacy to leave behind for your children and grandkids. Food for thought.

Frank F. Combs

Wilson... continued from Page 4A

to no longer support by way of corporate donations while making the decision to support other charities. It is support for Covenant House based in New York City and for the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) based in Montgomery, Alabama, that he finds objectionable.

A word or two about these nonprofits. In the 1960s, Covenant House began providing safe harbor for homeless teenagers and survivors of human trafficking in a life-enhancing holistic environment. A well-respected charity, they currently have 37 locations operating in the U.S., Canada and Latin America. The founder of Covenant House withdrew his association from the ministry in 1990 as a result of accusations, which were never proven, of moral and ethical failures. He lived out his remaining years

in quiet and contemplative solitude at his home in upstate New York. He died in 1999 but the good that he promulgated lives on. Covenant House holds an Accountability and Transparency score of 97 out of 100 from Charity Navigator and enjoys a Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar.

As for the SPLC, this organization's sole purpose is the advancement of civil and human rights in general and opposition to hate groups in particular.

For my nickel, I see nothing that the corporation that is Chick-Fil-A or its owner-operators need to apologize for. They just make darn good sandwiches. So, I say, along with the Chick-fil-A cow, "Eat Mor Chikin" – just maybe not on Sunday. (See Exodus 20:8-11).

Frank F. Wilson

Cummings...continued from Page 4A

to find Euler and Delph (Carolynn's mother). The girls found their mothers under the shade tree. The mothers' backs were to the girls, so the girls were approaching them from behind. Just as the girls reached their mothers, Little Bit called to her mother, "Mommy, Carolynn made me look like a movie star." Aunt Euler turned to find the curly

locks gone from her daughter's head. Not only were the locks gone, but, what little hair was left was gapped and of different lengths. Basically, her hair was a mess, and it took six months to grow back to normal. Aunt Euler was not very impressed with Carolynn's ability as a beautician. This never fazed Aunt Carolynn.

Today, she owns her own hair stylist shop in the little community in North Alabama.

Williams...

continued from Page 4A

still be at least seven years before you could buy a Darling 58 tree to plant. This is because of the amount of time it takes for chestnuts to grow and develop seeds. The American Chestnut Foundation has the goal of repopulating Appalachia with American chestnuts. Even with the research closer than ever, that goal is still many years away. However, with the advancements that have been made, it is conceivable that we will have growing populations of American chestnuts in our forest in the next 20 years. That would be a huge benefit to our forests and wildlife that hasn't been seen for 100 years.

If you have questions about the American Chestnut contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu. You can also check out the American Chestnut Foundation website at acf.org. They have a lot of great information on the breeding programs for chestnuts and how you can become involved.

Fowler...

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door and storming a beach. It shows the emotional toll of their compassionate sacrifice, and the emotional reward when a fearful little boy throws his arms around his rescuer's neck. Caviezel must have a bent for playing the courageous, sacrificial rescuer. His most famous rescue role was his portrayal of Jesus in "The Passion of the Christ."

Which is my point. The captive set free is a picture of what Jesus does for you. Your testimony is as the familiar lyrics say, "I was once was lost, but now I'm found." That's amazing grace.

Dyer...

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the department. There may be times when these firefighters can be on scene in minutes of the initial call. In isolated areas of the county, Suches for example, these trained firefighters may be on scene and treating a critical patient for up to 20-30 minutes before a med unit arrives. The department is fortunate to have firefighters who have obtained this training and who respond to these medical calls.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Chamber...

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tunity to visit many of our local businesses, speak one-on-one with local officials, and a trip is planned to go to the Capitol in Atlanta to meet with our state officials.

Be sure to check the Chamber website and calendar for more information about additional Chamber events and local activities.

Be sure to say a prayer for our Nation, Community, and Leaders to keep us safe, our Country strong, and to live Life Better in Blairsville!

Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse



July 5, 2023
In loving memory of
Paul & Shirley Cummings
by the Union County
Historical Society

July 10, 2023
In memory of
William T. Meeks, Sr.
on the anniversary
of his death
by Terry and Ginger Meeks

**Bell ringing information
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