

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Station 13

Union County Fire Department will be breaking ground on a new fire station soon. The construction contract for the new fire station was awarded during the last county meeting. The new station will be Station number 13 and will be located at the Hidden Harbor entrance on Highway 129 North.

This station will be a career station, meaning that there will be career firefighters at the station 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 365 days a year to respond to calls in that area. These calls range from medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, rescues, searches, hazardous materials, all fires and other various emergencies.

The plan for the station was developed several years ago. An evaluation of the area determined that a fire station was needed in that location due to the increased call volume and the ISO (Insurance Services Organization) rating for some homes and businesses in that specific area. Land was donated by a developer, and plans were set in motion to design and build a station there.

The design of the station has taken several factors in mind. The department wants to place full-time, career firefighters in the station to be able to respond at a moment's notice. These firefighters will be part of and support the volunteer firefighters who operate the three volunteer stations in the north division of the county.

The station is also designed to house an ambulance and crew if the Union General Ambulance Service desires to place an ambulance in that station. We have also included an office space and access for the Union County Sheriff's Office for Sheriff's deputies who are working in that area. These designs enable the station to be a public safety station and not just a fire station.

There are several advantages to having this public safety station. The station has the capability to house and operate all three public safety disciplines of law enforcement, EMS and fire. The location will shorten the response time to emergencies in that area by seven to nine minutes.

The fire station will be the third career station, joining Station 1 in Blairsville and Station 5 in Suches. This will provide more career firefighters for any major fire or emergency. Having a fire station in that area may reduce the ISO rating for some home and

See Dyer, page 5A

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



The Meaning of Hope

When you acquired your first car, started a new job, or first fell in love, you had hope. It wasn't just a car, but an expression of independence. It wasn't just a job, but a better income or career. It wasn't just about a person, but a loving, enduring relationship.

Yet hope can let you down. Let me take you back to 1971 during the Vietnam War, when John Lennon released the song "Imagine." He imagined "all the people living for today." He hoped away countries, religions, and possessions in order to usher in world peace and eliminate greed and hunger. It was one of the most popular songs of the 20th century, but it produced nothing for which Lennon hoped. We still yearn for peace and human flourishing.

What's the point of hope when it fails to produce the ideal? How do we make sense of it, when the idea of the thing is better than the thing itself, as happens so often? C. S. Lewis offers answers in "Mere Christianity." He uses the examples of marriage, vacations and learning. Even if the wife is pleasant, the hotels and scenery excellent, and the career in pharmacy interesting, "something has evaded us," he writes.

He offers three possible responses. The "Fool's Way" is to blame the thing. Get a new wife or try a more expensive trip and maybe you'll catch this elusive sense of satisfaction that beckons you. The "Sensible Man" decides that such passions are the idealism of youth. He gives up on hope and just settles down to boredom.

The third response is the "Christian Way." Humans are born with longings, some of which are fulfilled. But "if I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy," Lewis writes, "the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." Your unrequited hopes point to something deeper, your true country, which you find by faith in Christ. Such is the meaning of hope.

"I go to prepare a place for you," Jesus said, "and you know the way" (John 14)

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

This week's questions and answers focus on the Union County Fire Department, the Union County Emergency Management Agency, E911, and GIS mapping. These departments operate hand in hand with Fire Chief David Dyer. These questions are some of the most common questions we receive and the answers contain general information. If you have further questions you can call the Union County Fire Department at 706-439-6091.

Q. Is the Fire Department still doing the program where they will come and install a smoke detector in my home?

A. Yes! This is a great program that is offered by the Union County Fire Department through various grants they applied for and received which allowed them to purchase large quantities of smoke detectors to have on hand for installation in private homes. You can go to tinyurl.com/ucsmoke and this will take you straight to the Smoke Alarm Request Form. You complete the online form and then the Fire Department contacts you to schedule a time to come out and install smoke detectors in the correct locations within your home. The best part is there is no cost for this service.

Q. What if I have smoke detectors already but the batteries need changing?

A. You can also contact the Fire Department and they will schedule a time to come out and change the batteries for you. They will also test the smoke detector to make sure it is working properly and clean it. If the smoke detector is older than 10 years, they will go ahead and replace it at this point.

Q. How do I find out my Insurance Protection Rating, more commonly known as ISO Rating?

A. You can call the Fire Department at 706-439-6091 and talk to Jeannie Matheson. She will need the address to your home or the property in question. Then based on the home's distance from a fire hydrant and a fire station, she can tell you what your ISO Rating will be. This rating is used by insurance companies in determining your premium. Every time the Fire Department is able to expand, it can help lower your ISO rating and insurance premiums.

Q. Who do I contact if my green address marker is missing?

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

"Democracy" by Dictatorship

Dear Editor,

Here's a question for Jane and John Q. Public: have you ever wondered why, in our so-called democratic Republic, where one man (sic) one vote is how the average American exercises power? But then, paradoxically, nameless Wall Street bankers meet regularly (including this week), in the quasi-secret enclave, out of public view, called Jackson Hole, Wyoming. They meet as the so-called Federal Reserve Board, which is a private, non-governmental group, founded by banker J.P. Morgan in 1913. They are a group of rich and powerful bankers that in no way are subject to public scrutiny, or accountability. They meet in wealthy surroundings to decide ours and their financial "well-being" based on interest rates, that is, the cost of money and indebtedness, for example, mortgage and student loan debt.

These same private bankers decide the rate of money printing and distribution, mostly, supplied to their fellow bankers. Printing fiat money is a primary role, which results in devaluation by inflation. Money printed out of thin air, raises the cost of living, including raising the number of people in poverty and for which there is no democratic participation in the decision-making action.

Ordinary citizens, like you and I, are locked out of the most critical political and economic decisions. Instead, the vast majority of citizens are subjects in a dictatorship by a tiny minority, whereby the majority have no say or participation in America's most undemocratic decision-making system and rule by bankers' diktats.

Lance Johnson

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IRS

Dear Editor,

I would like to add just one thing to the recent and excellent letter regarding the IRS. The last thing we need is 87,000 armed IRS agents stalking this once great country. Suggestion. Hopefully our next presidential election will result in the return to common sense. So what do we do with these 87,000 newly minted agents? It is my suggestion they be sent to the border to augment those that are presently protecting the border. After all, they are armed and I would assume fully trained in the use of firearms.

Peter W. White

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Good & Bad Ideas

Dear Editor,

There have been several good ideas in this country, such as ketchup, the light bulb, waffle fries, penicillin, and of course the remote control -- there are just too many others to name here. There have been some decidedly bad ideas as well, again, too many to name.

The smartest people in the world are those individuals that can listen to another's problems and avoid them by a change in behavior, be it personal behavior or government policy.

I am no fan of Lamar Paris, and I do recognize he has done many good things for this county, but lately that good judgment is in question.

See Lausier, page 5A

Canning Plant Kudos

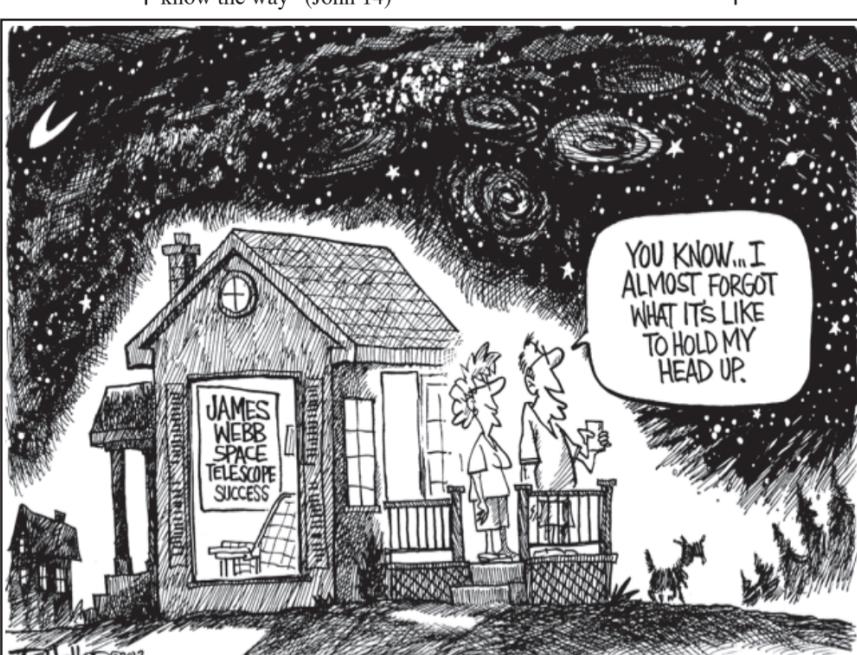
Dear Editor,

I took my apples that I grew here in Union County to the Union County Canning Plant. I hadn't been to the Canning Plant since it moved to the Farmers Market. Oh wow, it is much improved. You call and get an appointment to have your table reserved for you; it's like going to a fun restaurant.

Mickey Cummings, his staff and the volunteers at the Canning Plant helped me get back up to speed on canning. I say don't be afraid, if you've got something you want to can, call him, and he'll tell you what you need and help you get it done.

Union County works. Union County works for its citizens to make life great.

William Cosner



Letters to the Editor

Re: "Rename Lake Winfield Scott"

Dear Editor,

Some of my ancestors were Cherokee. Do I demand Lake Winfield Scott be renamed because Scott removed Cherokees from their homeland? No. This is history. It's in the past.

Just how far does the writer of "Rename Lake Winfield Scott" want us to go?

Should I demand Blood Mountain be renamed because it makes the Cherokee look bad due to the bloody battle with the Creek Indians?

Should I go on the warpath about how whites and blacks are reaping the benefits of land stolen from my Indian forefathers?

The Cherokee were not saints. They attacked white settlements sometimes, murdering and scalping their victims. Some captured and tortured other Indian tribes or sold them into slavery. They also owned black slaves. Chief James Vann was one of the largest slave owners in the Cherokee nation.

At the time of the Civil War, a total of more than 8,000 slaves were held in all of the Indian Territory. Most Cherokees favored the Confederacy. At the Battle of Pea Ridge, Cherokee soldiers scalped at least eight Union cavalymen and mutilated several others.

Since the beginning of time, all races have been enslaved and conquered and abused. History is the story of the conqueror and the conquered.

This letter writer suggests we rename the lake "Lake Grace" signifying a "new chapter of Forgiveness." But she encourages condemnation and division. As the Bible says, forget the past and move on.

Karen Pansler Lam

Enjoyable, Peaceful UCHS Softball

Dear Editor,

I attended the UCHS Softball Tournament at the University of North Georgia on Saturday, Aug. 20, and want to thank UNG for showing "RESPECT" to the spectators.

They did this by:

1) Not playing music so loud that people cannot even talk to each other or think. Like most schools do.

2) They played music that made me feel like I was in the North Georgia Mountains, NOT like in some inner-city neighborhood.

3) For those of you who believe the girls need a "Walk-Up Song" to play better, I feel they played their "Hearts Out" without one!

Girls, thanks for the "Memories."

UNG, thanks for being different and not like a lot of other schools that are just a part of the herd of sheep.

Rich Chmura

My Favorite Things

We all have our favorite things. These may be hobbies, foods, people, places or any other item of which you are fond. And there are specific reasons which make you fond of something. Let me tell you about mine.

Many people ask me about all these stories which I tell you about. I come from a family of storytellers. When I was little, my Dad would load up the car and we'd drive to our home place in Alabama. It might be 10 or 11 at night upon our arrival, but it did not matter. The family would gather around my grandparents' heating stove and Papa would regale us with his stories into the night. As I aged, I began to hear many of the same stories again, and my Granny would scold Papa by saying, "We've already heard that one!" But, I didn't care; I loved every one of them.

My all-time favorite story involved a wildflower whose name is lost to time. In 1940, Granny had just given birth to my Uncle Bud, and it must have been a difficult delivery. Complications caused her to develop "Milk Fever." She was sick and could not get better. The Doctor was called, and after her examination, my Papa was told that his 22-year-old wife would not make it through the night. The young man was devastated. Great Grandfather, Lon, asked if it would hurt to administer a certain herb to his daughter-in-law. The Doctor said, "It won't hurt." He came back the next day and was relieved that Granny was still among the living. He told the Cummings family to keep giving her the herb. It took six months for her to recover, and she went on to live another 62 years due to an herb and an old Cherokee man's tale heard by Big Papa Cummings. Now each spring, beginning in March, I scour the woods for an herb and wildflower which saved the life of my Granny 79 years ago.

This next one also pointed me down the road toward my career as a County Agent. As a little boy, there were no electronic games to keep me occupied. The things we did to entertain ourselves were usually found outside. We would catch insects and play with them! Some of you may think that strange and repulsive. However, I learned to catch June Bugs and tie a string around their back leg. Then you could turn them loose and hold to the end of the string, causing them to fly in circles around your head. Another summertime favorite was catching Lightning Bugs and putting them in a jar. In my dreams, I see myself running barefooted through the damp grass chasing the glowing insects in the evenings and hearing my folks laugh and tell stories. During

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Chamber of Commerce

It's time for the 2022 Leadership Union Program. I want to welcome the 2022 class, and what a great class it is, full of employees from our banks, school system, hospital, utility companies, and Chamber!

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Each year participants say they learned things and visited businesses in Union County they never knew about, and some of these individuals have lived in Union County their entire life. We are blessed to have our beautiful North Georgia mountains, the waterfalls and hiking trails that help support the tourism and hospitality industries, but we also have a great mix of industry that in some cases go unknown. The Leadership Union Program provides an opportunity for the class to visit these facilities and

See Chamber, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

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Paris... continued from Page 4A

ing or damaged?

A. You contact the 911 Mapping Office at 706-439-6056. They will need your physical address including road name and number. The new green marker is then made, and they come and replace the missing or damaged one. The marker is a huge support for emergency vehicles and delivery vehicles when they need to quickly locate your home.

Q. My road sign is missing. Who do I contact to get this replaced?

A. For missing road signs, you should contact the 911 Mapping Office at 706-439-6056. You give them the name of the road sign that is missing, and they will get it replaced. This process may take

a couple of days, so if your road sign is missing it is very important to call and report it to 911 Mapping. They then let dispatch know that a particular road sign is missing in the event emergency services are needed on that road. It is illegal for anyone to remove, steal, or damage a road or street sign. Help us keep our roads safe.

Q. If I feel like I need to speak to someone at 911 Dispatch, but it is a non-life-threatening emergency, what number should I call?

A. Union County 911 Dispatch has a non-emergency number that you can call. It is 706-439-6038. The Dispatchers on duty will prioritize calls and assist you as soon as possible.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

ing my sophomore year at Dalton College, I enrolled in an entomology class. I felt as if I had found my calling. The study of insects came naturally to me and helped point me in the direction of my career.

My wife and I had been married a little more than two years when we found the opportunity to move back to North Georgia. No offense to those from the flat lands, but there is something about watching a sunrise over a mountain. Especially if that mountain is covered in Oak Trees. When we moved, we were able to find a 12-by-30 trailer on Sand Mountain. It was located on a lot under some big Chestnut Oaks. We moved into the place in August. Late September meant the large acorns from those trees began to fall, and there were many nights I was awakened by what sounded like a shotgun blast when actually it was another acorn. I came to love those old trees, and now when I hear an acorn fall, I think of the pleasant memories we have from that time.

When I was 10, I received my first shotgun. It was a lever-action .410 gauge. The lever actually broke down the breech so a shell could be extracted or loaded into the gun. It was only meant for small game, and I was able to take many a squirrel with that gun. When my boys came along and decided to participate on the 4-H Shotgun Team, we purchased two shotguns. When practice began, I found myself smelling something familiar. The smell from those shells reminded me of the days I wandered across our family farm hunting squirrels in North Alabama and Georgia. Now when I go to the skeet range, a familiar aroma takes me back to the days when my boys were still around shooting skeet, and even further back, I can see a little boy with his Daddy and Papa wandering the hills and

ridges of home.

I also enjoy any waterfall, and this year is a year in which they are most enjoyable. There are many across our area that are unknown to most people. I simply enjoy going to the woods in search of ones I have never observed. Just the area between Turner's Corner and Neel's Gap contains close to 15 of them. You must get off the beaten path to find some of them. One of my favorites is no more than 200 yards off the highway. I enjoy climbing up toward the base and finding a place to sit and watch the water cascade down the rock face. There is something very soothing about the sound a waterfall makes. It will wash your troubles away.

The Union County Historical Society sells calendars each year which have photographs that share something of our past. The 2023 calendars have been printed and can be found at the Old Courthouse. These calendars contain photographs of area waterfalls. As you know, there is a bunch of us that love to ramble through the woods, and when we find a waterfall we photograph it. Over the years we have obtained quite a collection of them.

For example, we have Insurance Bluff Falls, Pretty Branch Falls, Canada Creek Falls and many others. Some are not even named. There is one called Romance Falls because many young lovers were drawn to its beauty through the years. If you would like to purchase one of the Historical Society Calendars, you can either come to the Old Courthouse or obtain one at the Mountain Heritage Festival at the Old Mock House on Labor Day Weekend. Finally, the Historical Society will present a program, free to the public, on Local Waterfalls at the Old Union County Courthouse located on the Blairsville Square on Saturday, September 10th, at 11 a.m.

Lausier... continued from Page 4A

tion. I also do not like how he treats people he disagrees with or threatens them with police action for speaking their mind in a meeting.

He has been in the job for around 20 years, OK, but sometimes people can be in a job way too long and either get burnt out or miss sight of their behavior.

I have lived in two counties that were really great places to live, until they added and changed the amount of commissioners: Gwinnett and Cherokee (Canton, GA).

Gwinnett is now a place that many are running away from due to the traffic, overcrowding, crime, etc., etc. It's a nightmare.

I grew up in Cherokee County, Georgia, and it was a really great place as well. So much so that I returned to that county several years later to live there in my forever house.

Trouble was, the number of county commissioners changed, and there you go: high-density housing, traffic jams, school crowding and crime. Of course, with school crowding, they needed new schools at the expense of property owners.

I watched with the same

sadness that my neighboring Forsyth County had the same problem. Calls and efforts to have controlled growth went unheeded when the commissioners were reaping the new wealth (often for themselves) and new tax money rolling in.

Quality of life plummeted -- dramatically.

I left and came here.

Now, I see the same thing happening here with calls for five commissioners. Could there possibly be a WORSE idea??? NO. It's a horrible idea.

Please hear me... Please listen!

Having five part-time commissioners is a really, really bad idea. It would be like dealing with a Hydra from Greek mythology.

If you don't like the commissioner, then get someone new, fresh ideas, a fresh look at our issues, but one man to deal with is way better and more efficient than five part-time people. And if you don't like the way the new person governs, recall him and elect someone else.

Multiple commissioners have proven to be a death knell to great counties; I know, I was there.

Eva Lausier

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

learn about the operations and what they contribute to Union County. The class also takes a trip to the State Capital, and when possible, speaks to our state legislators. The tour of our schools and hospital as well as an opportunity to sit with local leaders is always enlightening. This part of the programs reveals how our leaders work together to make our community the great place it is to work, live and play. If you are interested or have an employee you would like to participate in the 2023 class, contact the Chamber.

I also want to be sure to mention that we will be having the September 11th Remembrance Ceremony at Meeks Park at 8 a.m. We promise to have you out for church, but we feel this day should not be forgotten!

Only a few booths left for the Buy Local Extravaganza on September 15th at the Sports Complex, so don't hesitate, sign up now! This is

not just a business networking event; everyone is invited to see everything our businesses have to offer and visit with our organizations to learn about what they are doing in our community. An extra bonus to this year's event is that businesses that are hiring will be on-site also with employment applications and info about positions they are looking to fill. So, if you are looking for a new job, career change, or want to advertise your positions that open – this is the place to be!

Williams...

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Finally, plant apple varieties that have natural resistance to fire blight to ease the challenge. A couple of varieties that have natural resistance are Arkansas Black, Golden Delicious, Liberty, Yates, and Winesap. A few varieties that are highly susceptible to fire blight are Fuji, Gala, Granny Smith, Pink Lady, and Empire.

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

Dyer...

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business owners. We are excited and looking forward to this new chapter.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

American Red Cross Volunteers

Make a difference in your community! As a volunteer with the American Red Cross, you can help families recover after a home fire, train individuals in first aid and CPR, support America's military families, or take on any number of other roles that make our communities safer, stronger and more resilient.

Get started at <https://www.redcross.org/local/georgia/volunteer.html> or call your NWGA chapter office to ask about volunteer opportunities 844-536-6226.

Your Patriot Reflection



Civility

It is no coincidence that our words Politic and politeness stem from the same Greek root word Polis, which intimates a state or society characterized by a sense of community. We hope you caught the drift of that because politeness and sense of community seem foreign to the forms of politics seen in our country today! There is a tremendous amount of anger, rudeness, impatience and verbal attacks by those who should be setting the example of civility to their constituents. It seems that the old ethic of self-restraint has been replaced with a new ethic of self-aggrandizement. Civility at its best involves restraining the self and acting with due regard to others. George Washington, as a young boy, had a copybook entry of "110 Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation." With our nation so divided today we all need to read the rules, not just our politicians. John Locke offered his view of civility, which we should all strive for. He said, "Civility is that general good will and regard for all people which makes anyone have a care not to show, in his carriage, any contempt, disrespect, or neglect of them."

Readers, we can agree to disagree on a vast number of issues but let's try to do so in such a way that we part company as civilly as possible. Maybe our politicians will get the message.

A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www.joshuawarriors.org.

Friday Night Concert Schedule at the Historic Union County Courthouse

Friday evenings 7 PM

- September 2nd ... Sam Ensley
- September 9th ... Bound to Ramble
- September 16th ... Mars Hill Porch Pickers
- September 23rd ... Ray Perren
- September 30th ... Wilderness Pickers
- October 7th ... Nelson Thomas
- October 14th ... John Cochran and the Cowhands
- October 21st ... Kelly and Paige
- October 28th ... Skillet Lickers
- December 2nd ... Roy Perren (Elvis Christmas)
- December 9th ... North Georgia Chamber Symphony