

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Remember, and Pass it Down

In this fast-paced world, people rarely stop for anything, much less try to reflect or remember. With instant information and constant distraction in the palm of your hand, nobody takes the time to look back. But there are benefits to reflecting on the past. It provides information that may help in the future. It also honors the people, time, and the events that shaped our world and our lives today. The terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, is one of those dates and events that should be remembered.

There are many aspects to the September 11th terrorist attacks: the number of lives lost; the attack on American soil; the way it was carried out; the collapse and destruction of two of the largest and tallest buildings in the world; and many more.

Every American remembers this terrorist attack as an attack on our country, not just the soil, buildings, and people but on our peace and our way of life. As firefighters, we view that attack the same as any American but with the added thoughts and feelings of greatest loss, sacrifice, and pride. September 11th was the single greatest loss of firefighters in American history.

The war on terror was started and there were many battles in several countries and on the homefront. Military personnel were deployed and performed their duties to protect and defend our great nation. Many have suffered and bear the scars of these battles. Some gave the ultimate sacrifice. And today, there are still battles and deployments continuing that service.

September 11th should be remembered. If you were alive that fateful day, the images, the sounds, and the feelings are unforgettable. Just the mention of the date or the view of a single photo from that day will bring everything back to the forefront of your mind. For those who were too young or not even born, the events that day are being taught as history and relived by those who were there, all in the hope that these events and the actions of all involved will be remembered. It is our responsibility to remember.

It has been 22 years since that historic day. We have mourned our losses. Now it is time to be remembered and to celebrate the heroism and the sacrifices that were displayed by the people, the military, and the firefighters of that day. We must keep our promise to never forget, and we must pass it down to the next generations. Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



You Think

I admire a philosopher willing to push his beliefs to their logical conclusion. Alex Rosenberg does that. He believes only in "physical facts," a world without God. He concludes, "The illusion that there is someone inside who has thoughts about stuff is certainly as old as the illusion that there are thoughts about stuff. If the physical facts fill all the facts, there can't be a me or you inside our bodies." Since there is no God, there cannot be a thinking me.

I would counter that since we can think, God exists. How could sentient beings emerge from non-sentient matter? Time and chance are not plausible answers. Yet if there's anything you can know, it's that you think!

One category of thoughts is "self-talk." Everyone has that inner voice, which reacts to the world around you. This continuous soundtrack reflects your experiences and built-in biases. The bad news is that it may not be true or helpful since it is afflicted by the fallen human condition.

Listen to this self-talk. "I have never been eloquent. I am slow of speech," said Moses. "I am a man of unclean lips," said Isaiah. "I do not know how to speak because I am a youth," said Jeremiah. All three expressed fear to the God who would empower them to overcome their fear. Peter thought he should defend Jesus with violence, then his thoughts drove him to deny Jesus. Self-talk can struggle to tell the true, right story.

Your calling as a believer is to "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). With God's help, your mind overrules your human brain with thoughts higher than protecting or promoting yourself. Paul experienced this. He promoted his own cause by persecuting followers of Jesus, until Jesus changed his mind on the road to Damascus. He later wrote, "We have received the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God... We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:12,16).

Lyrics by Casting Crowns describe a transformed mind. "The giant keeps on telling me time and time again, boy you'll never win. But the voice of Truth tells me a different story. The voice of Truth says do not be afraid!" Here are other thoughts

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. I was shopping at the Farmers Market this past Saturday and noticed a sign designating a canning plant. I had no idea Union County had a canning facility. Is it open to the public?

A. Yes, the Union County Canning Plant is open to the public. The Union County Cannery is located at the Farmers Market. It is a community cannery for home/personal canning only. The Union County Canning Plant is not certified for commercial use and products may not be sold. The address is 283 Farmers Market Way, Blairsville, GA 30512. Anyone who would like to correspond electronically can email: cannery@uniongov.com

Q. I would like to do some canning. When is the Cannery open?

A. For 2023, the Union County Cannery is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 AM – noon. Canning slots are available by appointment. Demand for the use of the Cannery is great. Appointments can be made by calling 706 439-6043 or by emailing cannery@uniongov.com. Appointments are scheduled in time slots of 6-8:45 AM and 9-11:45 AM.

Q. Are the appointments usually fully booked on a weekly basis?

A. Yes, it does seem that all appointments are fully booked each Tuesday and Thursday. The cannery offers 20 total appointment slots each day the canning plant is open. It is estimated that the cannery is utilized by 30-40 people each day it is open.

Q. I have never canned any type of products. Will someone be on site to help me?

A. Yes, there is always someone on site to assist if necessary.

Q. What are the charges associated with using the facility?

A. The cannery charges 30¢ per pint and 40¢ per quart. The facility processes glass canning jars only.

Q. What should I bring? Does the cannery provide any hard supplies like jars, etc.?

A. Visitors wishing to can fruits and vegetables should

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



See Fowler, page 5A

See Paris, page 5A

Truthfulness

You and I are bombarded hourly by words, more words, and even more words. Day-by-day we are caught in the middle of verbiage, never ending. We try to escape, but wherever we go, we run into some type of communication asking us to do something, to go somewhere, or to be someone in particular. Cellphones, computers, televisions, and voices are ever-present.

Words are basically inexpensive, unless you are talking to a lawyer or a therapist. While words may sound nice, such as "You are my best friend forever," or "I'll do anything for you" — these are just mere words and nothing more as far as the real truth can be discerned.

Words can get to the point that they become exhausting at times. In ages past, people did put their trust in another's word with simply a handshake. Those days are long gone.

The closest thing to absolute truth is actions, one's behavior. Why? Everything we do

See Ashurst, page 5A

Successful Mental Health

Dr. James Ray Ashurst, Ph.D.



Letters to the Editor

Bidenomics Is Working

Dear Editor,
Bidenomics is the best term for the "IRA," or the Inflation Reduction Act. Signed a little more than a year ago when inflation in August of 2022 was at 8.5%, today it stands at 3.2%. Passed by Congress in a bipartisan effort bringing approximately \$370 billion in both private sector investments and government spending with an emphasis on clean energy development.
Nationally, there are currently over 270 new clean energy projects in the works. In Georgia alone, companies have announced nearly 20 major projects totaling more than \$12 billion.
See Psiaki, page 5A

Re: "Fair and Balanced"

Dear Editor,
Under the heading of "Fair and Balanced," a recent letter writer and newcomer to the area wondered if The North Georgia News was a "GOP" publication. She complained of only reading "one side" of national politics on the opinion page.

In 2020, President Donald Trump received 81% of the Union County vote; while 85% of the county chose to re-elect Governor Brian
See White, page 5A

Labor Day

Dear Editor,
Labor Day! The day, set aside by Congress to honor the labor movement, and those people in this country, who earn their living working for others, with their hands, backs and their minds.
Organized labor and the working men and women who toil day and night doing their jobs, oftentimes risking life and limb, are the creators of the American middle class. These are the people who work in the fields and process the food and stock the shelves at the grocery store, and bring it out to my car. They are also the folks who answer my call when I dial 911, the firemen.
See Cosner, page 5A

The Petition

Dear Editor,
There are a few people who actually understand what the Petition for five commissioners is about — most don't. Let me see if I can simplify the matter.
First, let me say that some people are suspicious about the people who want you to sign the Petition. I'm suspicious about the people who DON'T want you to sign the Petition, because they don't believe in "Of the People, For the People, and By the People." They don't want
See Brookins, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Complacency No Longer Acceptable

Dear Editor,
I walked away from the final Union County School Board hearing to raise our taxes feeling as if I had attended a Communist-led hearing. What has happened to Union County? Our freedoms are quickly slipping away. The elected School Board must be taking the lead of the Sole Commissioner by disallowing citizens' First Amendment rights of Freedom of Speech. What freedom will be next? Second Amendment?
Complacency is no longer acceptable. Perhaps a recall is needed for all Board members and firing the Superintendent. And by the way, the Super who is paid a super salary of \$171,000 plus benefits obviously has no concept of the financial difficulties of the average citizens of Union County.
Maureen Harper

School Tax Hearing

Dear Editor,
I am writing today to comment on what I saw on Aug. 31, 2023, at the public hearing on the school tax increase held at the Union County Board of Education at 7:30 a.m. The attendance was heavy for that time of the morning, and more than 10 individuals had signed up to speak to the School Board. Only five of these people were allowed to speak.

Why were only five people allowed to speak while the others were sent home without presenting their prepared presentations? The School Board has a rule for speaking at the monthly School Board meetings. These rules allow only five speakers and limit a speaker to only three minutes for their presentation. Yes, the public is privileged to speak at the monthly School Board meetings for a total of 15 minutes a month.

The School Board saw fit to institute this same rule for speakers at a meeting that is a public hearing. A public hearing is specifically called to allow the public to make their feelings on an issue known. Shutting down the public and not letting them speak is totally defeating the purpose of a public hearing. Only 15 minutes for the public to make their feelings known on the school portion of the property tax is surely not reasonable.

A public hearing is very different from a monthly Board meeting. In the monthly board meeting the public is allowed to attend and listen at the meeting and only as the last item of business before adjournment make short comments to the Board. A limitation on the number of speakers and the length of the speech is reasonable. (I may believe they have over done the lim-
See Peterson, page 5A

Asiphidity

When my parents were young there were no vaccines in common use. So, you may ask what did they do to help prevent influenza and other diseases? My Dad's cousin relayed the following story to us regarding something called "asiphidity."

Asiphidity was used as a poultice to ward off everything from disease to haints. Different concoctions were used at different times of the year for the prevention of different maladies. The idea must have come from the old country because there are records of Middle Eastern people using the Giant Fennel Plant to make the stuff. Sap from this plant was used to make a salve which was placed in a cigarette tobacco bag that would be pinned to one's underclothes. The stuff smelled terrible, and the idea was that germs of polio or the flu could not live around these stinking bags.

These bags were used throughout all of Appalachia. Charles Hill and Jack Lance both told me that these "asiphidity bags" were sold in their drug store years ago. Beginning in the fall people would come to the store and ask about purchasing them. Charles once said, "After putting them bags around your neck no one would come near you!"

During the 1940s a fellow named Bill Hawkins was getting up in years, and his beloved wife of many years passed away. Bill had become disabled in a farming accident and was no longer able to complete his household chores. So, Annie Wells would go to his house a couple of times a week to clean his house and wash his clothes. But, Bill had only a scrub board to wash his clothes. So, Annie decided to take his clothing to her house to use her brand new washing machine to wash Bill's clothing.

After cleaning Bill's house she gathered up Bill's clothing and took them to her home after which she separated his clothing and threw in some things of her own which needed washing as well. She run everything through the washer with detergent and then rinsed them. To dry the clothing she had to run each item through the ringer and then take them to the clothes line to hang for drying. She noticed that Bill's Liberty Overalls wouldn't go through the ringer for some reason. So, she felt of the chest pocket, and sure enough, something was left in it. She opened the pocket and pulled out the asiphidity bag. Bill had forgot the bag and left it in his chest pocket.

You must remember that these asiphidity-
See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Lawn Planting

Tall Fescue is the type of grass that I recommend the most often for lawns here. However, it is a cool season perennial. That means that its management is going to be different from warm season perennials like bermudagrass or St. Augustine grass. Let's talk about seeding tall fescue for a lawn because we are approaching the time of year when it's appropriate to seed it.

Tall fescue is a perennial grass, meaning that you don't need to reseed your lawn with it every year. However, if you seeded tall fescue in the spring you will most likely need to reseed it. Because tall fescue is a cool season grass, it doesn't like the heat. If it's not well established, the summer heat will kill it. That's why I recommend planting it in mid-September. Planting in mid-September will give it time to establish throughout the fall and spring before going through the heat of July and August.

There are a number of varieties of tall fescue available. Usually when you buy a bag of tall fescue seed it will have several different varieties in that bag. This is a good thing because the different strengths and weaknesses of each variety are able to cover for each other. Kentucky 31 variety is the old standard for tall fescue. However, there are many new hybrids, which are much better for lawns.

One of the reasons that I like tall fescue for our area is that it has some of the best shade tolerance. With the amount of trees that we have, shade is often a limiting factor to plant growth. Creeping red fescue is actually a different species from tall fescue but it has even better shade tolerance than tall fescue. These grasses will still struggle in deep shade. What they have is a tolerance of shade, meaning they still prefer full sun, but can take some shade.

When planting tall fescue it is important to prepare the soil first. Taking a soil test and bringing it to your County Extension Office (67 Lakeview Circle Hiawassee or 165 Wellborn St Blairsville) will give you a lot of information about your soil. You'll get fertilizer recommendations and lime recommendations specific to your soil from a soil test.

Before planting till and incorporate all the lime and fertilizer that is recommended on your soil test. Incorporate the lime and fertilizer into the top 3 to 4 inches, or deeper if possible, of the soil. Ideally, you want to seed 5-6 pounds of seed per 1000 ft².

After seeding rake the seed into the top quarter inch of the soil with a hard rake. If the seed goes too deep, it will struggle to germinate.
See Williams, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



See Chamber, page 5A

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Paris...continued from Page 4A

bring glass jars, lids, bands, products to be canned, and all necessary ingredients needed for the canning recipe. The Cannery does have some bowls, knives, measuring cups, spoons, funnels, etc., but you are encouraged to bring your own.

Q. What procedures can I expect to follow when I arrive at the Union County Canning Plant?

A. Because there are a fixed number of prep stations, order and processes are very important to ensure all appointments are honored.

a) Schedule your day/time by calling or emailing the Canning Plant.

b) Upon arrival on your scheduled day/time, complete the 2023 Registration Form. The first time you sign in, you will be assigned a number. You will use the same number each time you visit during the same year.

c) You may then go to your assigned table and begin preparing your product. If your product needs steaming/cooking, please let a staff member know so they can cook/steam your product and

return it to you.

Q. How do we handle jars and lids?

A. Place jars upside down in small baskets for sterilization. Staff members will take care of the sterilization process for you. After sterilized, you will write your registration number on the lids with a sharpie and then immerse your lids in hot water. You will place your product in the hot jars, put lids/bands on the jars, and signal a staff member. Staff members will complete the canning process for you. A typical canning process can take 2-3 hours.

Q. Once everything is in jars, do I leave?

A. Clean the table and any Canning Plant equipment used before leaving. Take your personal things with you. Return after the designated time to pick up and pay for your product. Place the exact amount inside the envelope, seal, and place it in the collection box. You can then take your processed product home.

We hope you enjoy using the Union County Cannery.

Peterson... continued from Page 4A

(itations, but that is an opinion.) The public hearing is designed to solicit input from the public over a specific issue, in this case the setting of the millage rate for 2023. When a public hearing is called and then the public is not allowed to freely comment, something is very wrong.

A monthly Board meeting has maybe two or three public attendees who are not school employees. The public hearings on the millage rate had between 20 to 50 attendees. The public cares about what is happening with their money and they wanted to address the board with their concerns. When the fifth speaker finished their presentation on the morning of Aug. 31, it became apparent that the Board was ending presentations for the meeting. Several members of the audience who had signed up to speak were reasonably upset and voiced their displeasure at not being allowed to speak. Chairman Hunter gavelled for silence and requested a motion to adjourn. The motion was made and seconded, unanimously passed and the Board members stood and left the room.

The majority of the members of the audience were stunned at what had happened. They had come at 7:30 in the morning, some were missing work to attend, and were not allowed to speak at a public hear-

ing after signing up to speak. Why call it a public hearing?

The Board did not want to hear anything from the public at this public hearing. They had already made their decision to adopt the proposed millage rate and were merely going through the motions to meet the requirements imposed by the state for public hearings. Why waste time beyond the 15 minutes allocated since they did not care anyway? So, they felt, let's adjourn the public hearing, reconvene and vote to adopt the proposed millage rate and go home or go to work.

The Chairman has several times told me he is too busy to answer emails or too busy to meet with me in a dialog. He has said that this is just a volunteer position and he has other things to do than meet with me. I suggest that being on the Board is not a volunteer position, but one that he campaigned for in order to be elected by the citizens. If he thinks that it is a volunteer position he is mistaken, and if he does not have the time to fulfill his duties and interface with the citizens that he represents, it is time for him to resign and let someone who will truly serve the citizens of Union County replace him on the board.

This comment holds for anyone else of the board who feels that they are merely volunteers.

Vince Peterson

Ashurst... continued from Page 4A

has a purpose — washing, cleaning, cooking, shopping, eating — everything we do has a reason for being done. So, if we want to know the truth, observe a person's behavior. If we want to really, really know the truth about the personality of someone, take a look at that individual's daily action.

If somebody tells you that your lawn will be mowed within a few days, you shouldn't be waiting, waiting a month later. As the saying goes, "The proof is in the pudding." And then we see that person in public, the individual may go overboard offering all

types of excuses for not showing up. His lack of action prosecutes himself. Duh! Get yourself a more reliable and truthful gardener.

As human beings, at times, we don't always do what we say we will do. We might intend to follow through on what we say, but truthfully it's only words with good intentions. However, from time to time, we do meet a person whose word is gold — that individual does what is promised. Such a person is valuable to know — the individual's honesty, integrity, and dependability are trademarks.

Brookins...continued from Page 4A

you to exercise your right to vote.

This petition is not an opinion poll. If you want 5, or 1, or 3, or 100, or 0 commissioners, SIGN the Petition! If you are tired of seeing people standing on the side of the road waving their signs, SIGN the Petition! If you are tired of all the discussions about this subject, SIGN the Petition! If you don't want five commissioners, SIGN the Petition! You can vote against it when it gets on the ballot. This is the People exercising their right to vote.

So, any, all, and every debate about how many

commissioners are needed is moot, irrelevant, and unnecessary. It's the same as putting a motion on the floor in a business meeting. There is no discussion until there is a motion made. This petition is the motion that will get the debate started. THERE IS NO NEED FOR DEBATE until it is officially declared that the issue will be on the ballot. Then, we can discuss the pros and cons of the matter.

As a matter of disclosure, I do not belong to any "group" that is promoting a five-man commission.

David Brookins

White...continued from Page 4A

Kemp in 2022. Though Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris is a Democrat, it's safe to say the NGN simply mirrors the conservative values, attitudes and politics of its majority readership. If it did not, I doubt the county's weekly news source would exist for long. This is the free market system most Americans still embrace, though the demonization of capitalism is on the rise by those desirous of cradle-to-grave socialism and a nanny state.

I wonder if the reader thinks The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, reflective of Atlanta and inside the I-285 perimeter "progressives," is fair and balanced when it pertains to Georgians that are pro-life; support the Second Amendment and secure borders; tire of watching our history reinterpreted and "canceled"; and have the audacity to believe there are only two genders — male and female?

Greg C. White

Cummings...continued from Page 4A

ity bags smelled to the high heavens. As Annie stared at the bag a panic began to well up inside of her. She reached into the washer and smelled of the other garments. Her husband had overalls in this wash as well as her sons. Annie sat on the steps of her back porch and began to cry.

There were four other pairs of overalls in her washing machine and each pair smelled terrible. She washed everything in the machine four times to no avail. She had to burn all the clothing in her washer. And it took another five rinses to rid the washing machine of the smell.

Twenty years prior to this event an influenza epidemic swept through the Eastern United States and many people died as a result. In the graveyard at the 1st Baptist Church of Phil Campbell, Alabama, there are graves of twin sisters, my Papa's aunts. These young lady's died during their teens as a result of influenza. You can find many graves like this spread throughout Appalachia.

During the 1920s-50s parents were desperate to ward off disease. As a result these aspidity bags became very popular. Dad told me that his mother made him and his

brother wear them every day during the winter and early spring.

Granny sent her sons to school wearing these stinking bags. But, they weren't the only ones. Granny had Paul and Bud wearing bags filled with Fennel, garlic, Ginseng and Goldenseal.

Paul said, "The smell of the stuff would cause me to become nauseous." One day while riding the bus one of the boys hit on a good idea. Dad told me, "Tucker suggested we tell our parents, 'The older boys ripped them bags off our necks and threw them out the window.'"

Tucker, Paul, Bud, William, Jimmy and the rest of the bunch of 10 year olds from Traptown School House threw away their aspidity bags and continued to do so until warm weather came to North Alabama.

Nobody ever suspected they were telling a story because they all said the same thing, and I know some of the older boys got whippings because their folks thought they were picking on the smaller boys.

I am sure all their teachers really appreciated those young boys not wearing their aspidity bags to school.

The bags may not have had any effect upon the mi-

cro-organisms which caused the disease. However, the aspidity smelled terrible which kept others from getting within 10 feet of anyone wearing the bags. So, in a way the stench of the aspidity bags did prevent the spread of disease.

So, if our government decides we all need to wear masks again maybe we should all wear aspidity bags instead. Other people would avoid being close to us and the incidence of disease would go down.

Williams...

continued from Page 4A

nate. Apply straw mulch on top of the soil. This will help to conserve moisture in the soil and keep your seed from being washed away. Ideally, you want to keep the top 2 inches of soil moist, but not wet for the first 3 weeks. After that just water once a week if there is no rainfall.

Start out cutting tall fescue at 2 inches as the grass matures you can raise the height to 2.5 to 3 inches. In areas of shade, it's better to let the grass grow a little taller to give it a better chance to compete with weeds.

If you have questions about a tall fescue lawn contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Fowler...

continued from Page 4A

from a transformed mind: I love the people I dislike because God loves them. God walks with me through this trial I face. My failures do not define me - God does. God's purposes will prevail. Greater is He that is in me than he who is in the world. I know the truth - His name is Jesus.

In a world created by God, you are no illusion. He made a thinking you inside your body. In Christ, you can be transformed with a renewed mind!

Chamber...

continued from Page 4A

If that is not for you, take a trip to the Reece Farm and spend the day in the gardens or on the farm learning about the poet Byron Herbert Reece. The kids, both young and old, will have a ball, and if you pack a picnic, you can enjoy lunch in a pavilion on the creek. Stop by the Farmers Market and visit the sunflower garden, the tobacco barn or learn how moonshine was made. If you look closely, you may see the next award-winning pumpkin.

There is so much to see and learn in Blairsville and Union County, so if you see someone in a bonnet be sure to say hello and be prepared for a great story.

Enjoy the day and take time to learn what makes Life Better in Blairsville!

Cosner...

continued from Page 4A

the sheriff's deputy, the police officer, the EMT.

They are the school-teachers and the coaches and the bus drivers and the custodial workers and the people working in the lunch line in the cafeteria. They are the quiet crews that keep Meeks Park beautiful, they are the people at the tag office that patiently explain to me how to fill out a title. They are the truck drivers, the cooks and servers in our restaurants, and the people working in the drive-through. The plumbers, electricians, brick masons, concrete finishers, framers, landscapers, and laborers who build our buildings and our homes.

Most of you are not in our thoughts until we need you! But without you, there is no America.

Thank you! Gracias!

Lorne Cosner

IAFF retired

Psiaki...

continued from Page 4A

From Savannah to Atlanta, EV plants, battery plants and solar factories are under construction, bringing in excess of 11,000 jobs. Korean solar company Hanwha Qcells, which already has a plant in Dalton, has announced both an expansion of the Dalton plant and a new plant in Cartersville. It is expected to invest \$2.5 billion creating 2,500 jobs.

All this while Gov. Kemp is reluctant to acknowledge climate change and none of Georgia's Republican Congress members voted for the bill. To put this in perspective, in April 2020, Georgia's unemployment rate was 12.4%. Today, it is 3.2%. Bidenomics is working, and it is working for all of us.

Steve Psiaki