

Opinions

Everybody has one...

National Preparedness Month

Union County Emergency Management Agency (UCEMA) in conjunction with Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency are using September's National Preparedness Month to encourage residents to prepare for disasters. The monthlong initiative increases awareness and inspires citizens of Georgia, including Union County, to be prepared for any natural or man-made disaster. UCEMA will join the many private, public and nonprofit organizations in motivating people to take the necessary steps to ensure their homes, workplaces and communities are prepared for disasters and emergencies of all kinds.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



If you've seen the news recently, you know that emergencies happen unexpectedly in communities just like ours, to people like us. It's for those reasons that we should make a conscious effort to become more prepared to face an emergency or disaster.

There are so many things that we can do to prepare. It can simply start with a conversation by asking, "What would we do if this emergency happened here?" By developing an emergency plan with our families, communities, congregations, neighbors and co-workers, we can ensure that everyone knows what resources are available in an emergency and what we need to do. We can work as a team to make our communities, our neighborhoods and our own families safer.

The theme for National Preparedness Month this year is, A Lasting Legacy: "The life you've built is worth protecting. Prepare for disasters to create a lasting legacy for you and your family." Week One encourages people to "Make a Plan." Week Two requests that people "Build a Kit." Week Three's theme is to discover and implement "Low-Cost, No-Cost Preparedness." Week Four wants everyone to "Teach Youth About Preparedness."

Take time to research each theme, develop a plan and put it into action. It is always a good practice to educate and involve youth in preparedness. Make sure to consider the costs associated with disasters and save for an emergency. Also, know how to take practical safety steps like shutting off water and gas to your home if affected by a disaster.

See Dyer, page 5A

Save the Queen

In 1952, 25-year-old Queen Elizabeth entered Westminster Abbey for her coronation. As she stood by King Edward's Chair, the Archbishop presented her. "God save Queen Elizabeth!" everyone cried out together.

God certainly gave her a long life. She couldn't have predicted that her reign would last 70 years and span such disturbing and tumultuous years. Yet she served her people and the world with grace and endurance. Her faith in Jesus inspired her. "The teachings of Christ have served as my inner light," she said recently.

Her 2015 Christmas message came amidst a year of terrorism and migrating refugees. The Chinese communists had made troubling power moves. "It is true that the world has had to confront moments of darkness this year," she said, "but the gospel of John contains a verse of great hope: 'The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.'" The context is that Jesus is God the Son, the Creator in human flesh who offers the gift of eternal life. "In Him was life, and the life was the Light that overcomes the darkness of evil."

In 2020, the world was responding to the COVID pandemic. In that year's Christmas message, the Queen mentioned one of Jesus' parables. "This wonderful story of kindness is still relevant today. Good Samaritans have emerged across society showing care and respect for all... reminding us that each one of us is special and equal in the eyes of God." By creating us all in His image, God made the Queen and the pauper of equal and high value. "In the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen. 1:27). He made you as a unique person so He could love you. When you grasp that God made, values, and loves you, it moves you from selfishness toward loving your neighbor.

The Queen's 1952 coronation service ended with the singing of the anthem, "God Save the Queen." By all indications, He did. And now, Elizabeth has departed for the land of the living.

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

War Memorial continued...

Q. Last week in the NGN, there was Q&A about the Veterans Memorial on School Circle, off War Memorial Street. Does the old War Memorial recognize all branches of the service?

A. Yes it does by way of the flags overlooking the memorial. They represent all branches of service. However, the focus of the memorial is on Union County residents who lost their lives in wars of the past.

Q. We noticed on the War Memorial that there are 93 Confederate Soldiers and two Union Soldiers' names engraved on the stone. Did Union County lose that many citizens in the Civil War?

A. It certainly is amazing that we did lose so many. Which is more incredible is that there were more soldiers from Union County killed in the Confederate War (95), than all the other wars combined. Afghanistan (0), Indian (2), Iraq (2), Vietnam (6), Korean (1), World War II (23), World War I (8), and the Mexican War (23).

Q. It is hard to believe more lives were lost by Union County citizens in the Civil War than in all other wars combined.

A. It certainly is, and it goes to show you why our county has two companion organizations - Sons of the Confederate Veterans and United Daughters of the Confederacy - dedicated to keeping the history alive so that we never forget those who were lost.

Q. What do you think it was like back then living here?

A. If any of us lived in Union County during the Civil War, it would have been similar to being drafted into the military service. Except, there was no draft. People volunteered to support their country, and, in this case, it was the war between the North and the South.

Q. Should we think badly of those who served to save the South as they understood it was their duty?

A. Absolutely not. This was just the way of life at that time.

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Habitat for Humanity

In December of 2021, Habitat for Humanity of Williamsburg, Virginia, became the first affiliate to successfully complete a 3D-printed home. This three-bedroom, two-bath, 1,200-square-foot home was constructed in a mere 12 hours. With the advancement in technology, 3D printing is setting the stage in an emerging market that allows for sustainable, cost-effective homes and half the time and price of traditional stick-built homes.

Habitat Happenings Executive Director
Charlotte Randall



What exactly is a 3D-printed home? By taking a digital file and footprint of the house design, BOD (Build on Demand) printers deposit material into the home using concrete. While 70%-80% of the home is constructed in concrete, the remaining is built with traditional material. Companies like ICON and SQ4D are taking this idea to reality and successfully completing not only houses but commercial buildings. With the ability to customize the

See Habitat page 5A

Letters to the Editor

152 Choices

Dear Editor,

All ya'll who want to have a County Board of Commissioners in Union County, have 152 CHOICES to move to a different county in Georgia. "I WILL BE GLAD TO HELP YA PACK!"

Rich Chmura

The Children's Transgender Litmus Test

Dear Editor,

Most of us know that LGBTQ people are actively making their voices heard. For much of the world's history, these people stayed in the shadows to avoid discrimination, which makes their emergence today understandable but challenging to the status quo.

That said, one specific element of the LGBTQ movement has me and many others concerned. It is the transgender wing. Specifically, if a young boy or girl decides that he or she was born the wrong gender as if there was an accident in the womb, it is extremely troubling on many levels. Especially troubling if that young boy or girl thinks it is normal and OK to change their gender, and their parents agree, and a doctor performs the surgery. That is appalling to me, but there is another side to this disturbing situation.

What concerns me is that kids will always have confusion about who they are, who they should be, and who they want to be when they grow up. While children go through the turbulent maturing process, they are extremely vulnerable to social pressures. The thought of changing their gender should never tease a child's imagination. The media, the public schools, the government, Hollywood, major corporations, and even some churches are grooming children to believe that

See Ripma, page 5A

Special Propane Deal for City of Blairsville

Dear Editor,

This was buried in an article on page 2A of the Aug. 17, 2022, edition of the North Georgia News:

"In other city news, the council approved the Freeman Gas bid for propane at a price of \$1.89 per gallon for the period Sept. 1, 2022, through Aug. 31, 2023, with a fuel delivery fee of \$10 and a new fuel surcharge fee of \$7 per delivery.

"Given recent global issues with fossil fuel and natural gas supplies, costs are increasing over the 2021-2022 rate, which was \$1.69

See O'Connell, page 5A



Letters to the Editor

How Sad

Dear Editor,

It is truly sad when the party in power has no plan for stopping the invasion on our southern border; no plan for curbing inflation; and no plan for stopping crime in our major cities; but they do have a plan for killing unborn babies and targeting those that have a contrary point of view. Can you really be proud to be a Democrat?

Peter W. White

The Tax Man Cometh: The Final Chapter

Dear Editor,

Just a few final observations on my property tax tirade for 2022. On the front page of the Sept. 14th edition of the North Georgia News, we see Lamar's smiling face alongside Tax Commissioner Lee Knight, announcing that the new improved, combined millage rate for 2022 is the lowest since 1989. If you read the article, which concluded on page 6A (that's the back page that nobody reads), you would have found that state law requires millage rates to be "rolled back" to produce "the same total revenue

See Bernthal, page 5A

Why Vote Democrat?

Dear Editor,

To the 979 individuals in Union County that voted Democrat in the May 24, 2022, primary:

I'm wondering why you voted Democrat.

Is it because you like the war on fossil fuels which stopped energy production in America then asked other oil producing countries to increase production until the mid-term election is over?

Is it because you like the United States

See Burch, page 5A

Careful What You Wish For

Dear Editor,

I was reading our latest issue of the paper and there was a wonderful Op/Ed from a concerned volunteer at one of our charitable organizations which takes in donations and then cleans them up and resells them. My Mom had a saying: "One Man's Garbage is another Man's Gold." I'm sorry the volunteer isn't happy with the quality of the donations their organization has been receiving, but here's the thing. When your business asks for and survives off dona-

See Rains, page 5A

Lon Steele & Hoover Baggett

Daddy (Paul) and his brother (Bud) owned a pair of outstanding coon hounds during the 1950s. Daddy was about 14 years old when his Dad traded for the pair of Black-and-Tan puppies. Papa and his sons trained the hounds on squirrels and raccoons. The family enjoyed squirrel dumpings while a boy could sell the hides from the coons for a little money. Old Sam and Lou hit their stride around 1956-57 when they treed more than 100 coons during the fall and winter.

The pair of dogs became widely known, and everyone wanted to hunt with that fine pair of coon hounds owned by the Cummings boys. Daddy was particular about his dogs. So, he never let anyone borrow them. However, anyone could go hunting with him and his dogs. One day he was stopped in town by Lon Steele, who asked if he could borrow Daddy's dogs. Daddy explained that Lon could come and hunt with him and his dogs anytime. But, the dogs could not be borrowed by anybody. So, Lon told him that he and Hoover Baggett would meet him at the Mon Dye bottoms on Saturday morning.

Dad met them at the old bridge over Little Bear Creek. As he was releasing his dogs he knew there would be trouble because Lon took a swig from a flask located in his pocket. The dogs struck a trail and treed a squirrel in 10 minutes. Hoover and Lon celebrated by passing around their flasks. By the time the men reached the dogs at the next tree, Hoover Baggett and Lon Steele were in high spirits. This time the dogs had treed a big old Fox squirrel. It must have weighed 5 pounds and was the largest any of them had ever seen. The men celebrated once again with their flasks. It wasn't long until the dogs struck another track. Dad noticed Lon stumble a couple of times as he began walking toward the dogs.

The dogs trailed their quarry across the creek and treed next to a bluff (the size of a house) at the foot of a tall bluff. The area was rough, and it took the two men a long time to walk the 1/2 mile up the creek bottom. Dad said he wasn't sure if the men were just out of shape or if the alcohol was affecting their ability to walk. But, they fell down a number of times before they got to the tree and big rock.

This boulder was huge and about 50 feet high. Dad said the tree was a Hemlock, and it was difficult to locate the coon. So, they all climbed up on the rock to try to see the squirrel. Finally, the three fellows found it and Lon de-

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Chamber of Commerce

I would like to thank everyone that participated in the Buy Local Extravaganza last week! There were 81 vendors displaying their products and services, and all had a great time interacting with more than 1,000 visitors that came out to the Union County Sports Complex. The "Touch-A-Truck" was a big hit with both the young and young-at-heart, and as usual, everyone stopped to watch the helicopter land and to get a look inside. Thanks to Scotty and the staff of the Union County Sports Complex for the use of a facility that is second to none.

Anyone gone out in the morning and felt the fall in the air? It's that time of year and I can't help but get excited for fall football, too. If you are looking for something to do, I would recommend catching a Varsity game on Friday evenings, or you could cheer on the Junior Varsity, Middle School, and Rec teams Thursday evenings or Saturday. You can also

See Chamber, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



Sweet Sorghum

Fall is approaching, even though we have a few more hot days left. Sweet sorghum in the fall is part of culture and history in the mountains. It used to be more common and there were sorghum mills scattered all over the place. There are still a few people who grow sweet sorghum for syrup and carry on the tradition. Today let's talk about the history of sorghum, how it's grown, and how it's turned into syrup.

Sorghum is a member of the grass family. It originated in Northeastern Africa. Sorghum has been bred to fulfill four different modern day uses. Grain sorghum is used for flour. Forage sorghum is used to feed livestock. Biomass sorghum is used for bioenergy. Sweet sorghum is used for sorghum syrup. Sorghum made its way to America in the 1850s. Today, the Southeast, and particularly Appalachia, is known for sorghum syrup production.

Sorghum syrup production has declined over the years. This decline is largely due to its production being heavily labor intensive. Production has also declined as other glucose syrups have taken over. However, recently sorghum syrup has seen a bit of a resurgence with the increased interest in locally made products.

Sorghum is an important crop because it performs well under adverse soil conditions or drought. It does not require a lot of fertilizer, and adding too much nitrogen to the soil will decrease sugar levels. Typically sorghum is planted in May and ready to harvest at mid-September through early October. Weeds can be an issue with sorghum because it grows very slowly at the beginning of the season, giving the weeds a chance to grow up around it.

Sugarcane aphid is the biggest challenge of growing sweet sorghum. Sugarcane aphid is an invasive species that is resistant to many different insecticides, making it very difficult to control. It overwinters in south Florida and moves northward each year. If left untreated, sugar cane aphids will destroy a field of sorghum. When they start to arrive, you will see hundreds of them clustered on a plant, and they will feed off that plant until it dies and move onto the plant next to it. There are websites that are used to track the movement of sugarcane aphids northward each year to let growers know when they need to begin the treatment.

The key to producing good syrup is to have a high Brix level in the sorghum stalks.

See Williams, page 5A

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Paris... continued from Page 4A

time. Were there some that were radicals? Certainly – just like today. Many families felt the duty to serve the South, and they should not be criticized for serving what, to them, was their country and way of life.

Q. Would we recognize the family names of many of the soldiers on the War Memorial?

A. Some of the last names should be very familiar to many of you. Some of the names include: (Confederate) Addington, Akins, Alexander, Brown, Carpenter, Chastain, Clemmons, Collins, Colwell, Conley, Davis, Freeman, Gilbert, Gillespie, Gray, Head, Hood, Ingram, Miller, Nix, Owenby, Parton, Satterfield, Seabolt, Smith, Sparks, Stephens, Sullivan,

Weaver and Wilson. (Union) Walker.

When you visit the memorial, please take time to not only look at the names, but to look at the tiles you walk on.

Q. What do the tiles you walk on represent?

A. They represent the wars with a total of all U.S. citizens lost in them, including Union County. They use abbreviations, so you have to take your time to figure them out. Please enjoy the Union County War Memorial.

Next week we will discuss the new Appalachian Veterans Memorial Park and the fundraising efforts associated with it. The park will be constructed at Meeks Park to remember those who are serving or have served our nation's military.

Habitat... continued from Page 4A

wall depth, 3D-printed houses allow for more insulation and higher R values. Concrete is resistant to fires, pests, mold, hurricanes, and other natural disasters that stick-built homes have been prone to. SQ4D homes offer a 50-year warranty on their products, while meeting state and local codes they are currently building in.

After years of technological experimentation and engineering, 3D-printed houses are emerging as a cost-

effective and practical solution to the housing crisis. Austin, Texas, will soon unveil the largest neighborhood of 3D-printed homes, bringing an affordable housing solution to the area. While the project or location has not been unveiled, 100 affordable 3D homes will soon be available for purchase. The future of housing is shifting, and the ability to embrace and learn from it can provide a remarkable solution to allow everyone a safe and decent place to live.

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

catch a softball game or a cross country meet. These athletes work hard to represent our schools and community while maintaining their academic requirements and busy schedules. Regardless of the sport, go to one of our great restaurants and then go take in a game or a meet and

cheer our teams on and show your support.

Please be sure to go to <https://www.visitblairsvillega.com/> to see what's going on at the Chamber and around Blairsville-Union County.

Thanks to all that help make Life Better in Blairsville!

Ripma... continued from Page 4A

one of their choices is - gender. Hogwash!

I think the gender option for children, if there is one, is destabilizing the natural world and our culture. Could the children's transgender movement be part of a larger scheme to erase historical facts and redefine our understanding of right and wrong? Could it be causing many citizens, who once loved the United States and our culture, to now see it as an

evil empire? Could it be making other tax-paying citizens afraid to speak out for fear of one-party retribution?

For those who still love this country and don't want to see it castrated by vocal minorities, maybe it is time for level-headed citizens to base their votes on where a politician stands on the children's transgender movement. It can be a litmus test for a much larger outcome.

John Ripma

Burch... continued from Page 4A

being a good world neighbor by allowing 4.6 million illegal aliens to cross the border (Department of Homeland Security), selling the Chinese Communist Party six million barrels of oil from U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve (U.S. Department of Energy), and selling the latest battery technology developed by American scientists to a Chinese company (U.S. Department of Energy)?

Is it because you like Bill Gates and George Soros working (i.e. funding) to elect prosecutors that base charges on ideologies and not the law?

Is it because you agree that federal employees should not lose their jobs whether they are performed or not (Presidential Executive Order)?

Is it because you like

the party's desire to be part of the following: United Nations "Agenda 2030"; United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG); and World Economic Forum (WEF)? All are designed to bring about one world order by controlling food and energy supply.

Is it because you like the party denying states funds for the free and reduced school lunch program for poor families if the state does not agree to allow biological males to compete in female sports and do away with he or she pronouns in documents (USDA)?

Is it because you disagree with parents being able to count the fetus as a dependent on their state income taxes?

George Burch

Bernthal... continued from Page 4A

on the current year's new digest that last year's rate would have produced had no reassessments occurred." Continuing, you would have found that "the county expects to receive additional FY23 property tax revenues in the amount of \$312,997, and the schools are projecting to receive an additional \$391,885 in property taxes over last year." I'm confused. Exactly how does this square with the state law re-

quiring a rollback that produces "THE SAME TOTAL REVENUE" that last year's rate would have produced? I guess that's what my (little or no) 12.7% tax increase this year is funding. Anyway, if you haven't already run the figures on your property, you'll know by the end of this month, when the tax man cometh to your mailbox.

Steve Bernthal

Halfback Resident since 1993

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

cided to shoot it. He pulled out his pistol and shot a couple of times with no success. He was too inebriated to shoot out the critter and claimed the critter was moving too much.

The tree was close enough to the boulder so Hoover was able to jump from the rock to the tree trunk. He then climbed up the tree to where the squirrel was located. His idea was to use a stick to poke it out of the tree. Hoover stood on one limb and was holding to the limb on the other side of the tree. He was poking the squirrel with a long stick using his free hand. It was not moving any, so Lon Steele decided to help Hoover. He raised his gun and began shooting.

Dad said both men were laughing and Hoover was encouraging Lon to shoot the squirrel while Lon was so drunk he couldn't even see what he was shooting at. Finally the squirrel ran into a knothole. So, Hoover thrust his hand into the hole after the squirrel and soon began to howl. He pulled his hand from inside the tree, and the squirrel had sunk its teeth into his hand. While he shook

and waved his hand back and forth in an effort to free the squirrel from its grip on his hand, Lon raised the pistol and fired at that moving squirrel. But, he missed. However, he did shoot the limb on which Hoover was standing. The limb cracked and broke. Hoover crashed more than 50 feet to the ground. Dad was scared to death. He claimed that was the only time he saw a man get shot out of a tree.

The squirrel got away after Hoover hit the ground. Dad quickly and quietly gathered his dogs while Lon Steele staggered to the aid of his friend. I guess both of them thought Baggett was dead. All at once laughter filled the air around the big rock. Dad climbed up on the rock and watched the two men recount what had just previously happened. As my teenaged father left the scene the two men were still lying on the ground laughing. Later they said that hunt was the most fun they'd ever had. Dad refused to go hunting with them again. He said it liked to have scared him to death to watch that man fall from that tree.

Williams... continued from Page 4A

Brix is a measurement of sugar in an aqueous solution. One degree Brix is 1 gram of sucrose in 100 grams of aqueous solution. Deheading, or removing the seed head at the top of the plant, will increase the Brix number. It is also important to harvest at the time when Brix is at its peak. After it peaks, it will start to decline.

Once the sorghum is harvested, it must be pressed to extract the juice out of it. Historically this was done with a mule-powered press, but there are electric ones available now. The juice is allowed to settle and then run through the pan. The pan is over a fire that cooks out the water in the juice. Typically, a producer will get 1 gallon of syrup for 8-10 gallons of juice. After cooking, the syrup is ready to sell.

If you are interested in

growing sorghum, contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

I am hosting program on Georgia Ginseng on October 3rd via webinar from 6 – 8 pm. If you are interested in attending you can register at this link. https://ugeorgia.cal.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5aUUKTwfao23ZQ

Dyer...

continued from Page 4A

As we continue to respond to emergencies and disasters in our area, we are also preparing for other emergencies. We encourage everyone in the community to do the same. You never know when an emergency may strike, so prepare for it now because disaster preparedness is everyone's responsibility. For more information on National Preparedness Month and how to be prepared, visit www.ready.gov/september.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Rains...

continued from Page 4A

tions and the generosity of others, you have to take the good with the bad. Dirty diapers were mentioned by the writer. Well, if those diapers are cloth, they can be cleaned, sanitized and then sold. The dirty crock pot they mentioned can be cleaned, sanitized and then sold. A broken TV can be fixed and then sold. Perhaps a better use of this volunteer's time would be not complaining about the quality of donations they are getting but looking for and finding retired electronics repair people and others, that can actually handle these types of situations, to volunteer.

Of course, there is an alternative. If you keep complaining about the free stuff you're getting, people can just stop donating. Be THANKFUL for what you get regardless of what it is, because it can always be worse. You could get nothing at all. Frankly, if I knew which organization this person volunteered at, I'd stop giving to them because I'd know there's at least one person there who doesn't appreciate the generosity of others.

Claude Rains Jr.

O'Connell...

continued from Page 4A

per gallon with a fee of \$10 per delivery.

"Blairsville city employees will receive a 40 cents per gallon discount on the market price of LP gas from Freeman gas as well."

It appears that residents and businesses of Union County are subsidizing drastically reduced rates for the city and their employees. This doesn't seem fair when so many Freeman Gas customers will be making hard decisions in these desperate economic times.

Jerry O'Connell

Military Time

History of the US ARMY
Part 1 of 4

By: Whitey White



(Part 1 of 4) The history of the United States Army began in 1775. From its formation, the United States Army has been the primary land-based part of the United States Armed Forces. The Army's main responsibility has been in fighting land battles and military occupation.

The Continental Army was founded in response to a need for professional soldiers in the American Revolutionary War to fight the invading British Army. Until the 1940s, the Army was relatively small in peacetime.

The Army was under the control of the War De-

partment until 1947 (at which time the Air Force became completely independent of the Army Air Forces), and since then the Defense Department.

The U.S. Army fought the Indian Wars of the 1790s, the War of 1812 (1812–15), American Civil War (1861–65), Spanish–American War (1898), World War I (1917–18), World War II (1941–45), Korean War (1950–53) and Vietnam War (1965–71).

Following the Cold War's end in 1991, Army has focused primarily on Western Asia, and also took part in the 1991 Gulf War and wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan.