

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Veterans Unstoppable Cont'd

Hello there Musing Mates:

Previously I wrote about a program that my husband and I attended, and I thought that I would take the opportunity to write a parted series about the program, ahead of the game, as my husband and I venture off to Yellowstone.

Part Three

Veterans Unstoppable is a life skills development program designed to foster a healthy War to Peace Re-adjustment for all Veterans. It is noteworthy that spouses and significant others are encouraged, where possible, to participate in the program, to help strengthen the foundation upon which the relationship is based. There may be use in future programs for the families of suicide victims, to help identify the cause and stop the cycle.

Catching you up on the Veterans Unstoppable program from two weeks ago, we continue on with Wednesday, where we examined Family Tree and Military Timeline. In the family tree we were asked to, in addition to mapping our tree, identify traits that followed down the tree, such as alcoholism, abuse, drug use, military service, physical, emotional, or social developmental disorders. The military timeline made us look at our progression through time and rank. Oddly satisfying it is to see these progressions laid out on paper in front of you. You get to objectively look at the piece of work, logically and sequentially, without having to rely on memory to piece things together. We finished the day talking about what military and family mentors taught us, good or bad. It was an eye-opening day.

See you next week. Until then, I bid you, "At Ease!"

Military Musings

Janice Walters-Taylor



Not Going Away

I admire Peter Boghossian. The atheist professor refused to be muzzled and resigned from Portland State University.

He couldn't continue teaching critical thinking and ethics due to university policies. He said, "Students are not being taught to think. Rather, they are being trained to mimic the moral certainty of ideologues. Faculty and administrators have abdicated the university's truth-seeking mission and instead drive intolerance of divergent beliefs and opinions." He called the school "a Social Justice factory whose only inputs were race, gender, and victimhood and whose only outputs were grievance and division."

Boghossian joins Christians in advocating for open inquiry. Censorship prevents strong arguments from seeing the light of day. It shines the light on pre-determined conclusions, allowing weak evidence to be the only evidence. When people are denied access to robust dialogue about what's true and what matters, they parrot as their own the opinion of those who control the dialogue, all the while believing they are expressing an autonomous opinion.

We are left with a culture that mocks the Creator's design for humans and the best expression of our humanity. That disordered view of reality creates victims. Christians engage our culture, but changing culture is not the end game. We want people to rise above the cultural confusion, to escape the cultural triviality and idiocy that leads to despair and hopelessness. Those victims need to hear the real story.

We tell that story with scientific evidence that supports intelligent design. We appeal to the logic of objective moral values pointing to God. We have historical evidence that Jesus lived, died, and rose again. We respond to our friends' opinions asking, what do you mean? How do you know that is true? What difference does that make? What if you're wrong? The Truth will set you free!

Jesus engaged skeptics. He identified the problem - "Everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin," and offered the solution - "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:34-36). Even though people refused to believe Him, He

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Before I start this series of questions, I want the public to know that while I do not have a pet because I have no time to have one, I have had many dogs in the past. I love dogs and I appreciate the value they offer to those who own them. While some of the comments of this Q & A may seem counter to this statement, I am trying to deal with an issue that potentially has lots of sides based on information gathered from different sources, including the public.

Q. What is a "service dog?"

A. A "service dog" is an American with Disability Act (ADA) federal regulation designation. In order to have a true "service dog", an owner must have a disability requiring the use of a trained service dog. To prevent problems with access, it is strongly suggested that you have a "service dog certification card" in addition to the vest. Many service dog vests actually have an area to display your certification on the vest.

Q. What are the most common disabilities a "service dog" assists an owner with?

A. PTSD, Vision Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Hypoglycemia/Diabetes, and Depression.

Q. Is an "emotional support" dog the same as a "service dog?"

A. NO! Actually, there is no difference in an "emotional support" dog and a pet. Neither requires certification and most pets provide some type of emotional support to their owners. While not often an issue, some people place vests on their dogs to allow access for the owner and their pets to areas they should not be allowed access, knowing that they are violating the spirit of the law.

Q. Does every dog that has a "service dog" vest mean that it is a real service dog?

A. No it does not, but fortunately most people abide by the ADA regulations. You can usually tell when a person has a real "service dog" from the behavior of the dog. They usually are exceptionally well behaved, stick with their owner and will usually be laying at the feet of their owner when in a restaurant or food service establishment.

Q. Are there any Health Department "rules" that apply

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

Accountability

Dear Editor,

Number 1: If I were to give an enemy firearms of any caliber or size, especially \$80 billion worth, could I get away with that? Not according to the Treason Act 18 U.S. Code 2381. I am guessing I would be in a whole wad of trouble. So my question is this: will the POTUS be free of this, and if so... how come?

Number 2: If I were to bring in illegal aliens across our borders and transport them to anywhere I desire in the USA without notification or permission, could I get away with that? Not according to the Immigration and Nationality Act (I.N.A.) Section 274(A)(1)(A)(ii). Again, I am guessing I would be in a whole wad of trouble. So my question is this: will the POTUS be free of this, and if so... how come?

Number 3: If I were to give great amounts of money to support rioting, burning of buildings and do bodily harm to others, could I get away with that? Not according to 18 U.S. Code 2101. So my question is this: why do the Democrat supporters and George Soros get away with it... and how come?

My final question is simply this: why are these laws on the books and not being acted on or enforced? I think I know why, or at least somewhat — we have turned into a weak, gutless, no-spine nation... soooooo what'sya think?????

Gary Lee

Don't Reward Irresponsibility

Dear Editor,

The North Georgia News reports that the City of Blairsville plans on rewarding (bribing) civil servants for civic responsibility. A civil servant is a person employed by a government to serve and protect the public who pay their salaries. They should not be bribed for "doing the right thing," as the general public would be expected to do. The City of Blairsville's offer to provide a \$1,500 "incentive" to protect themselves and other members of the public is wrong. Instead of a reward for personal and social responsibility.

See Cooper, page 5A

Vaccinations

Dear Editor,

We keep hearing "the science" referred to by gullible people who think anyone who doesn't want a COVID vaccination didn't graduate from sixth grade and is incapable of understanding their logic.

Here are some items for the vaxxers to peruse:

In Israel, where over 60% of the population has been vaccinated, hospitals are reporting

See Tarter, page 5A

Re: TSPLOST Tax

Dear Editor,

I handle transportation policy issues on behalf of Georgia's county governments and was asked to provide you with some information on Single County TSPLOST.

For background info, in 2010, the Transportation Investment Act provided an opportunity for regions throughout Georgia to impose a 1 percent sales tax for a 10-year timeframe to fund transportation improvements within their region. Three of the 12 regions were successful in passing the tax in 2012. The Georgia Mountains Region, of which Union County is a member of, did not pass the Regional TSPLOST referendum.

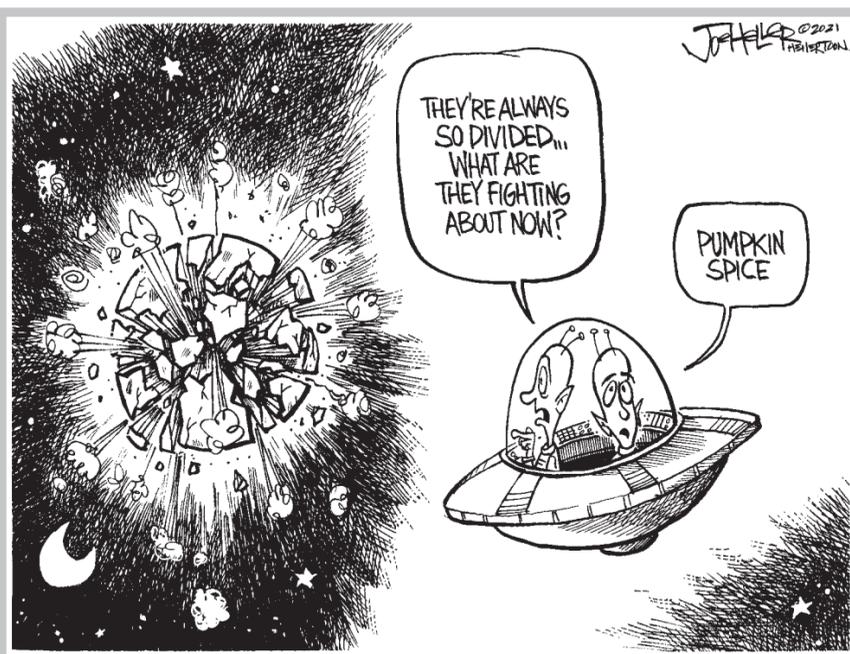
To provide another transportation funding option, in 2015 the Georgia General Assembly passed legislation that authorized a Single County Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, or TSPLOST. To date, 33 counties have passed Single County TSPLOST.

The sales tax generated from a Single County TSPLOST remains in that county for transportation projects. The only money that "goes to Atlanta" is a small administrative fee to the Department of Revenue collects.

The 30% amount mentioned in the letter to the editor incorrectly states the purpose of that 30% requirement. State law says that a minimum of 30% of revenue generated must be used on projects consistent with the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (<http://www.dot.ga.gov/IS/SSTP>).

The Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, or SSTP, is a GDOT policy document and does not include an exhaustive list of projects. Because the SSTP identifies a broad range of supportive strategies and programs, many, if

See Bowen, page 5A



Letters to the Editor

Please Stop

Dear Editor,

To those of you who drive on Murphy Highway.

I have tried to understand why someone would drive 10-15 miles per hour under the speed limit on Murphy Highway. And then speed up to 60-65 mph to keep from being passed in the passing zones. Then immediately slow back down to 10-15 mph under the speed limit once they're through the passing zone.

Was it something in your childhood, do you hate everyone, or are you just miserable and want everyone else to be miserable along with you?

Do you even THINK about what you're doing? Please stop before you cause a serious accident and someone gets seriously injured. This isn't just a once in a while occurrence, it happens all the time.

George Eckman

Money Better Spent

Dear Editor,

In reference to an article in last week's paper, I can't believe Blairsville City Officials intend to pay elected officials and city workers to be vaccinated. Rough estimate, high thousands. If people choose not to be vaccinated, I hope for them and those around them that they stay lucky. If they don't and contract COVID, then don't come crying for hospital care. I'm sure the money in the COVID Relief Fund can be better spent than protecting people from themselves.

Roger Boyle

Ashamed of Christ

Dear Editor,

In the book of Mark in the Bible Chapter 8:38, Jesus is telling His followers that if you be ashamed of Me, I will be ashamed of you. As faithful Christians, we must be committed to the cause of Christ no matter the cost to ourselves. We cannot be idle or lazy in our pursuit concerning the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Christ, Jesus. In view of what Christ has done for us at the cross and what He promises to do for us in the future, we ought not to be standing on the sidelines, twiddling our thumbs and indulging in criticism.

Christians find it so easy to criticize others, but specifically, what are you doing to get out God's word? That is the important question in this hour, as every born-again believer in Christ and every pastor should be preaching exactly what folks need to hear, not a feel-good sermon that has no real value or worth, but a sermon that

See Combs, page 5A

The Scoundrel

The names of the participants in the following story have been changed to protect the guilty. When I was a boy there were very few turkeys in north Georgia. Then things changed for the better and turkeys became quite common. But, all of my friends wanted to be able to take a turkey.

One particular friend wanted to take one so bad that he studied turkey hunting. He studied it more than he studied math or any other subject.

My friend, Patrick, was reading a book written by a great turkey hunter which said that using a ghillie suit would help the hunter to conceal himself from the turkeys. So, he went to the local Army Surplus store and purchased a ghillie suit. Ghillie suits are a camouflaged, netted suit used by snipers in the military. So, the young man began using the ghillie suit while he chased Gobblers all over the hills of north Georgia. But, he still had problems taking a turkey because he was young and inexperienced. So, he hit upon a plan.

The young man took some corn from his Dad's corn crib and found a place where turkeys had been roosting. He poured the corn on the ground under the trees. Then he seated himself against a tree with big log lying on the ground next to the tree. He would strike his slate Turkey Call every 15-20 minutes. After an hour or so, Patrick noticed the bushes moving and heard leaves crunching as if an animal were walking toward him. As he peered through the bushes he saw a man's head, then his whole body, and then another who man was with him. The young man recognized the men. They were the local Game Wardens. Everyone knew that Gene was a fair but tough man. Patrick knew he was in trouble.

So, he laid himself down next to the log and covered himself with leaves and listened as the Game Wardens came closer and closer. Soon he could hear each and every word the wardens spoke. He said, "Gene walked so close I could have reached out and grabbed his foot." Despite looking for 20 minutes the wardens never saw my friend. Finally, the wardens sat down on the log and rested. The other warden spoke first and said, "Looks like he just baited the area and I think we must have scared him off." Gene said, "Nope, the little scoundrel is close by because I can feel it in my bones." Eventually, the wardens left, and so did Patrick. This incident scared my friend straight, and he never baited turkeys or any other game.

The next September a bunch of us boys were helping Eugene work his cows. He knew Patrick loved to deer hunt, and while they were resting, he asked Patrick, "I reckon you are looking forward to getting into the woods to hunt."

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Septic Smart

Maintaining a healthy septic system is very important. Fixing a septic system that is damaged from improper use can be expensive and time consuming. Many homes in the mountains are on a septic system, and sometimes the homeowner may be someone who has never had a septic system before. Let's talk a bit about septic systems and how to maintain them.

One in five households in the US are on a septic system. One third of people in the Southeast are on a septic system. Septic systems provide several benefits. One of these is that a decentralized waste management system reduces the risk of disease transmission. A septic system also has environmental benefits because it removes pollution from surface water and recharges groundwater and aquifers. There is also a cost benefit because it reduces the need for communities to build large treatment facilities. A septic system that is properly constructed and maintained provides excellent wastewater treatment. State and county governments regulate septic systems.

There are a few different types of septic systems but generally, they all have a pipe bringing wastewater from the house to the septic tank. In the tank, solids will float to the bottom, where microbes break them down over time. There will be another pipe that flows over the drainfield. The drainfield handles the effluent that comes off the tank. This effluent goes into the soil, where microbes filter it.

One problem that you can have with your septic drainfield is roots clogging the stones and penetrating the pipes in your drainfield. Don't plant trees on your drainfield. Also, avoid parking cars or other heavy machinery on it, as this can damage your pipes. Keep stormwater drains away from your drainfield. Excess water in the drainfield makes it difficult for soil to process all the water that is flowing through it.

Another thing to do is to make sure that you have properly disposed of waste. The only things that should go down the toilet are human waste and toilet paper. Be careful about what you put down your sink. Toxins or bleach will kill the microbes that digest and treat the waste in your septic system. If you have a clogged sink, try to use a snake or boiling water to clean it. Never pour cooking oil or grease down the drain. If you have a garbage disposal try to limit its use. This will reduce the amount of fat and grease that enter your drainfield and clog it up.

Another tip to help your septic system to use your water efficiently. High efficiency toilets

See Williams, page 5A

North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West Publisher/Owner Shawn Jarrard General Manager/Editor Derek Richards Advertising Director Todd Forrest Sports Editor Lowell Nicholson Photographer

Website: www.nganews.com • Email: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com • Mail: P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

The North Georgia News is an independent and nonpartisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articles covering local events, etc.

Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m. • Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - One Year \$40. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$5. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 17, 1988, at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.

Phone: 706-745-6343 Fax: 706-745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, Georgia 30514

Paris... continued from Page 4A

to non-service dogs/pets in places that serve/sell food?

A. Yes. In the State of Georgia, you CAN NOT have any type of pet, service dog or emotional support dog in any public or permitted venue area where food is being prepared. It is strictly against the law and prohibited. You can call the Union County Health Dept. or any other law enforcement agency to report this abuse, because it could negatively impact the public health.

Remember this is only the food preparation area, not the seating area. It is up to the restaurant whether to allow pets in the dining area, except for "service dogs" that are allowed in all areas except the food preparation area.

Q. I have seen little and big fluffy dogs in Home Depot and other stores including grocery stores and Walmart in the shopping carts. In my mind this is a public health issue. Several of my friends find it alarming that pets are allowed in grocery stores and

restaurants that are obviously not "service dogs." What are the regulations?

A. Most of this has been covered in the above answers. However, in researching for this column, we found it is up to the food service store or grocery store to decide if they will or will not allow pets in their facility.

Q. What can we do if we do not feel the way a store is handling its pet issue is sanitary?

A. It is a personal decision for you as a shopper. The obvious answer is to contact the store operator if you see what you think is abuse. In the case of large corporate types of stores, you would need to contact their corporate offices since the decisions related to pets in the stores usually come from above.

Q. Are there any regulations for non-food stores regarding pet access to their stores.

A. No, it is strictly up to the store owner or operator.

Combs... continued from Page 4A

would stir each heart to want to go out from their service and tell others the good news of Jesus Christ.

Where has the passion gone, or did you ever have it when you first got saved and you wanted to tell others how Jesus had changed your life for the better and where you were headed after this life was over? Being ashamed of Jesus Christ and His message of salvation seems to be very popular in the days we are living, but there will always

consequences for our actions, and having Jesus Christ be ashamed of us is heartbreaking indeed. We are not here to judge anyone, especially other Christians that are working hard to proclaim God's Holy Word.

Examine yourselves and see if you are in God's will as you surrender everything over to Him in prayer and supplication to bring praise, honor and glory to Our heavenly Father in heaven.

Frank. F. Combs

Cooper... continued from Page 4A

responsibility, they should be given a disincentive for negligence and social irresponsibility. A \$100-\$200 monthly surcharge on their health insurance policies to cover increased medical costs and a bi-weekly mandatory COVID test should be instituted, the same as with many other major employers.

Union County has a COVID infection rate of over 14%; that's one person (most unmasked) out of every seven that you pass or that serves you in the grocery, restaurant, hardware store or municipal building. Union County has 91 COVID deaths, a COVID testing rate of 30%-plus positive results, nearly 3,000 infections among its residents, and barely a 42% vaccination rate.

Union General Hospital is above capacity with patients stored in any area that can be found. There is no room for

"normal patients" with heart issues, annual checkups, serious injuries and all the usual hospital admittances. Most elective and non-immediately life-threatening procedures and surgeries have been cancelled. The COVID cases of the unvaccinated have consumed all of the available bed space. Don't skip the vaccine and show up at the hospital expecting a bed, a ventilator and someone to care for your irresponsibility. The unvaccinated and unmasked have imposed the results of their irresponsibility on the responsible population by continuing this plague and its restrictions upon all of us.

Do not reward selfishness and social irresponsibility. A reminder to "do the right thing" is in order, not a \$1,500 bribe to be a responsible public servant. GET VACCINATED!!!!

Dan Cooper

Tarter... continued from Page 4A

that 85-90% of covid hospitalizations are of fully vaccinated patients and 95% of the "severe" patients have been vaccinated.

In the U.K. an Oxford study finds the death rate among vaccinated is 6.6 times that of the unvaccinated and that the vaccinated "break-through" cases carry a HIGHER viral load with the Delta variant than earlier unvaccinated pre-Delta victims did.

NOTE: The vaccine was designed to minimize the illness, not prevent it. And it isn't.

In a standard clinical trial, a control group receives no medication as a means to compare with the subjects receiving the test medication.

Conclusion: If EVERYONE gets the vaccination, to whom do we compare results? On your airline flight, the

pilot and copilot never eat the same meal choice to mitigate any chance of food poisoning disabling the crew. So why are our young frontline fighter pilots ALL being required to be vaccinated with a drug that has not had any long-term testing completed?

Conclusion: The military is being bullied and national security compromised by unscientific civilians for political reasons.

I can go on and on about the spike proteins attaching to your circulatory system resulting in clots and the mRNA breaking the blood/brain barrier, but we don't have enough room here.

I believe in evolution and that man DID land on the Moon.

And I will NOT be getting the jab, Bunkie.
J. Murray Tarter

Bowen... continued from Page 4A

not typically all, TSPLOST projects will be consistent with the SSTP. For example, projects that would be considered consistent include interchange projects, safety projects, and operational improvement projects. You can find the 2021 SSTP document at http://www.dot.ga.gov/InvestSmart/SSTP/GDOT_FINAL_2021SSTP.pdf.

This 30% is not money for GDOT to use – if the referendum were to pass, all money raised in Union County would be used for transportation projects in Union County, minus the Department of Revenue

admin fee.
Kathleen Bowen
ACCG – Georgia's County Association

**Editor's Note: Inquiring after more information on the topic, the North Georgia News sent the letter to the editor titled "TSPLOST Tax" published in the Sept. 8, 2021, edition of the newspaper to State Sen. Steve Gooch, who serves as the Vice-Chairman of the Transportation Committee*

in the Georgia Senate.

Gooch forwarded the letter to the Georgia Department of Transportation, which in turn reached out to ACCG's Bowen, as she is familiar with, gives presentations on, and regularly answers questions about the Single County TSPLOST, which is a county-led effort in partnership with cities. Bowen then wrote the newspaper.

ACCG is a nonpartisan group that represents and lobbies on behalf of county gov-

ernment. Commissioner Lamar Paris is a long-serving member of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and was president of the association in 2010-11.

Sen. Gooch did not support the Single County TSPLOST that passed in his home county of Lumpkin last year, saying he believed "the sales tax should be a rollback to the millage rate in each county, in my opinion, and not just keep adding more taxes to hard-working Georgians."

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

My friend looked at Eugene and said, "Yes sir. This little scoundrel loves to hunt. I bet you can just feel that in your bones, Mr. Burnette." Eugene looked at my friend and asked, "Where were you at that day?" Patrick recounted the story and told Eugene where he hid and what the two Game Wardens discussed. He also said not to worry, "I'll never hunt illegally again."

Because of a great man and Game Warden, Patrick stayed to the straight and narrow and never got cross ways with the law ever again. He became good friends with Mr. Burnette and helped him out many times on his farm over in the Skeenah Gap area. Patrick became a good man due in part to another good man.

Fowler... continued from Page 4A

lived, died, and rose again to make it real. Paul reasoned with thought leaders in the Areopagus. He mentioned "the times of ignorance," and the coming judgment. They sneered when he revealed that God raised Jesus from the dead. But Dionysius and Damaris heard the real story, and believed (Acts 17).

To follow the examples of Jesus and His servant Paul, we continue to engage the world we live in. We are called to such a time as this. With joy and hope, we beggars show other beggars where to find bread. Intolerance and cancel culture will not muzzle us. We love and are willing to associate with people who would shut our mouths. Our lives make the truth real, and we are not going away.

mountainchristian@brmcmc.net

Williams... continued from Page 4A

and showerheads can reduce the amount of stress that you put on your septic system. Select the proper load size on your washing machine to avoid overloading your septic system. If you can, spread your clothes washing throughout the week. Doing all of your laundry in one day will put a lot of water through your septic system at one time.

Finally, a professional should inspect the average household septic system at least every three years. Typically, it will need to be pumped every three to five years. The size of your septic system is based on the size of the house and the number of bathrooms. Adding on to your house and using more water than the septic system was designed to process can lead to problems. You can tell if your septic tank is full from the odor, sluggish drains, standing water in the drain field, and sewage backing up into the home.

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

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

our differences, but we need to remember what made Union County our choice to live and work! Next time you see our local leaders, please be sure to thank them because it can be a thankless job. Above all, don't forget to pray for our health care workers, first responders and those they are treating.

Remember, It's Better in Blairsville!

UC Historical Society's Brick Walk

To show our appreciation for the overwhelming community support for the Union County Historical Society's Brick Walk, we are extending the current price of \$50 per brick. Please call the Historical Society at 706-745-5493 or come by the old courthouse to purchase one in memory or in honor of a loved one.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month



All month, mental health advocates, prevention organizations, survivors, and community members unite to promote suicide prevention awareness. We can all help prevent suicide. Now, more than ever, we all need to invest in our mental wellness. Self care is always important, and this is also true in recognizing the need in others. Talk to one another and share the resources below with others who are in need or may know someone in need.

Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in Georgia according to 2017 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The suicide burden in Georgia stretches from rural to urban areas and touches every racial and age group. Georgia is a leader in developing community and public policy solutions to suicide. In early 2019, suicide prevention stakeholders across the

state, convened to learn and discuss the complexity of suicide, suicide prevention in Georgia, and priority goals and strategies to address the burden of suicide. Many of Georgia's top minds and leaders in suicide prevention gathered, committed to forging a new path forward with recommended goals, objectives, and strategies for all stakeholders to invest their time and energy. Committees focused on Prevention in Healthcare; Wellness, Resiliency, and Recovery; Safe Messaging; Evidence-Based Prevention and Interventions; Training and Technical Assistance; and Postvention. The final document of the proposed 2020-2025 Georgia Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan is still being drafted.

For further information, contact suicide.prevention@dbhdd.ga.gov; National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24 hours a day 800-273-8255 or 800-suicide; suicidepreventionlifeline.org; namiga.org or the Helpline 770-408-0625. NT(Sep22,21)CA