

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## Winter Weather Preparedness Week

The recent cold weather that came through last week is a reminder for the residents of Union County to prepare for winter weather. Union County Emergency Management Agency, in partnership with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency's Ready Georgia campaign, is encouraging citizens to take time to prepare for possible inclement weather emergencies this winter.

Since winter weather can be unpredictable, especially in our mountain community, we're hopeful that people will take time to become better educated on potentially dangerous winter storms and conditions. These can include snow, ice, sleet, freezing rain, and sub-zero temperatures. Winter Weather Preparedness Week is a great time for Union County residents and businesses to consider these storms and conditions as well as the hazards that they bring.

Winter Weather Preparedness Week, from December 4-8 this year, was created to raise awareness of winter weather hazards and reinforce understanding of winter weather terminology. Throughout the week, Union County EMA and GEMA/HS will provide information to assist Georgia residents in preparing for winter weather.

Each day concentrates on a different aspect of winter weather. The focus for each day is as follows: Monday, Dec. 4: Winter Weather in Georgia – learn about winter weather hazards that can impact the North Georgia mountains and the state of Georgia. Tuesday, Dec. 5: Winter Weather Terminology – learn about winter weather "alerts" (watches, warnings, and advisories) and what they mean. Wednesday, Dec. 6: Winter Weather Preparation Tips – learn how to best prepare for winter weather events and put together a "Ready Kit" while making a plan before winter weather strikes. Thursday, Dec. 7: Winter Weather Driving Tips/Safety – learn "best practices" for driving (if necessary) in winter weather conditions and how to pack a mobile "Ready Kit." Friday, Dec. 8: Winter Weather Outlook for the 2023-24 season – resources for learning where and how to stay informed of weather forecasts.

Winter weather in our area can be diverse and unpredictable. Weather conditions can change rapidly and may even be differ-

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**Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief**

David Dyer



## The Essential Gift

I'm bad at selecting gifts, but I enjoy the gift-giving tradition at Christmas. I disagree with C.S. Lewis on this point. He calls Christmas gift-giving "a commercial racket." Perhaps with tongue-in-cheek he says, "The modern rule is that anyone can force you to give him a present by sending you an unprovoked present of his own. It is almost a blackmail. Things are given as presents which no mortal ever bought for himself – gaudy and useless gadgets."

I suspect I have given gadgets that went straight to the re-gifting shelf. Now, Mrs. Fowler should earn an award for her giving prowess. She's good at it even when she's not trying. She taught an adult education course in music appreciation, focused on the orchestra of Andre Rieu. After class, a widow wrote a heartfelt note saying, "I signed up for the class just for something to do. But you have given me joy I have not had since my husband died." Imagine that...giving someone the gift of joy!

The right gift given at the right time is the essential gift. The ancient Israelites received the gift of hope with the promise, "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity" (Mic. 5:2). The Magi followed the star to Bethlehem to see this ruler. When Jesus became a man, He affirmed this hope saying, "The kingdom of God is in your midst" (Luke 17:21).

Christ Jesus is the essential gift, not just promised to the ancients but given to you. How could you describe the gift? I offer three answers. It is belonging. "To them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12). It is being held blameless and equipped to survive life's chaos. "Those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17). It is new life from the One who gave His life. "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Lewis was resisting the commercialization of the season, not denying the essential gift of Christmas. He wrote, "Christian-

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**All Things New**

Wayne Fowler



## Commissioner's Questions

It has been brought to my attention that some of our residents are unable to get to local holiday celebrations due to transportation. Many Union County residents do not know that we offer transportation services. The availability of adequate transportation enables older persons to live independently in their communities, helps to prevent isolation and the possible need for long-term care placement. Many older people, who do not drive, must rely on family and friends to provide much of the transportation. But for others, it is necessary to find community resources to provide transportation, as this vital support service may be their only connection to the outside world. If you need a ride to some of the local holiday celebration events, this information may help.

**Q. What is the Union County Transportation Services?**

A. The local system offers rides for a nominal fee for those who need transportation to and from doctor's appointments, the grocery store, drug stores, and other locations within the Union County limits.

**Q. How is this service funded?**

A. Partial funding for this service comes from the Federal Department of Transportation through the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). A 50/50 grant, Union County is responsible for matching 50% of the funding. Union County spends funds up front for such things as wages for drivers, dispatchers, fuel, maintenance, etc., and GDOT reimburses Union County for eligible expenses. Federal money is given to GDOT and that agency distributes these funds to Georgia counties. There are different types of funding for different types of transportation systems in the State of Georgia. The money that comes to Union County and surrounding counties is from the Section 5311 Program – which is for Rural Transit. Because of the county population, the size of the City of Blairsville, and the distance between transportation stops, funding for rural counties is limited to "on call" trips as opposed to regular bussing routes.

**Q. How many vehicles does the Union County Transportation Services operate?**

A. Two 8-passenger vans make up the fleet of the Union

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**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**

Lamar Paris



## Thank You, America

By Yonatan Hambourger and Tzali Reicher

On the most spiritually significant day in the Hasidic calendar in the winter of 1986, the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of righteous memory – the most influential rabbi in modern history – surprised the thousands gathered in his New York synagogue by beginning to speak about... Thanksgiving.

Normally known for his commentary on Torah insights or the Jewish perspective on current events, the Rebbe, who spearheaded the global renaissance of world Jewry after the Holocaust, instead praised the uniqueness of the United States. He highlighted how the country's original settlers immediately proclaimed a holiday of thanksgiving to God upon their arrival, expressing gratitude for a secure land and freedom from religious oppression. The Rebbe, who maintained mutually warm and respectful correspondence with the presidents and leaders of his day, also frequently lauded America as a "Medinah shel Chesed" – a nation of kindness, a

See Hambourger, page 5A

**Echos from Sinai**

"Torah for Everyone"

Rabbi Yonatan Hambourger



## Letters to the Editor

### Taxes

**Dear Editor,**  
The time approaches for us to pay the required property tax. Commissioner Lamar Paris has often said that the school taxes on the elderly fixed-income group cannot be eliminated because the tax base is so minimal in this rural county.

So the elderly who have paid all their lives must continue to be burdened by the School Board's wants and desires for more money.

Since 2020, the building of new homes in Union County has exploded with new homes springing up on the mountains and in the valleys. Many more people are building homes here, whether as their full-time residence or as their

See Lausier page 5A

### Biden & War in Gaza

**Dear Editor,**  
The highest priority of the Biden Administration regarding the war in Gaza has been to contain the conflict. Biden stated: "Any country, any organization, anyone thinking of taking advantage of this situation, I have one word: Don't." The presence of the two U.S. carriers in that region emphasizes that statement.

Because mostly innocent civilians have borne the brunt of Israel's incessant bombing attacks, protests have erupted all over the world. Up till very recently, calls for a cease-fire have

See Floyd, page 5A

### Addiction Treatment

**Dear Editor,**  
There are many accounts of addicts who wish to wait until after the holidays to seek treatment. Prior to entering rehab, they would like to spend time with their families and avoid missing a holiday. They ultimately use more to get away from the harsh reality that confronts them. They think there is no way out of the stresses of life, no way out of their addiction, and no way out of getting help. The next thing they know, these anxieties push them to keep using, which ultimately

See Goodson, page 5A

### No Dictators

**Dear Editor,**  
I am a citizen of the United States of America and a resident of Union County. I do not support governments run by dictators. The School Board has five members and the Blairsville City Council has five members. Union County should also have a five-member Board of Commissioners.

Ruth Horn

## Space Heaters

It's that time of the year when we fire up the old wood heater or fireplace so we can enjoy the dancing flames, crackling of the wood burning so we can warm our backsides and toes. We don't think about the cobwebs, bird nests, and creosote in our chimney left over from the long hot summer.

When it is hot, we don't think about cleaning out our chimney for the first fire. It gets cold and we light the match and plan to clean the chimney on Saturday. Saturday might be too late after our first chimney fire! Wood heaters and fireplaces make the room warm and toasty but are only one escaping spark away from disaster.

Wood heaters seem most dangerous but in fact seemingly safe space heaters are the deadliest of all. While only 32 percent of home heating fires involve space heaters, they are involved in 79 percent of home heating fire deaths, according to a report released by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Heating equipment continues to be the second leading cause of home fires behind cooking and the second leading cause of home fire deaths behind smoking. NFPA is urging caution and asking the public to practice safe heating behaviors as the peak time for home heating fires continues, and half of all home heating fires usually happen in December, January, and February.

The leading factor contributing to space heater fires in general was heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing, mattress, or bedding. Other leading factors contributing to home heater fires were failure to clean, which is principally related to creosote build-up in chimneys, and leaving an operating space heater unattended.

Whether your chimney supports a wood or coal stove or just a fireplace, be sure to have it cleaned and inspected at least once a year to reduce your risk of having a fire. Always turn off a portable space heater when you go to sleep or leave the room. In 2017, U.S. fire departments responded to 66,500 home structure fires that involved heating equipment. These fires killed 580 people, injured another 1,850, and were responsible for \$608 million in direct property damage.

NFPA offers the following safety tips: Use a sturdy, metal screen to prevent contact burns, which are even more common than flame burns. Keep things that can burn, such as paper, bedding, or furniture, at least 3 feet

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**RC&D Executive Director**

Frank Riley



## Historical Preservation

During the Spring Quarter of my Junior year at the University of Georgia, I found myself in a Genetics class taught by a Doctor A. A. Fleming. As roll was called on the first day of class, he paused for a moment when my name was called and looked around the room to determine which of his students was associated with this name Cummings. I was then asked where I was from, and I explained that I was raised in Chickamauga, Georgia.

He responded, "Well, Mr. Chickamauga Cummings, the reason I asked is that I remember a Lon Cummings from Alabama that made a spinning wheel for my mother many years ago." I asked my professor about which part of Alabama, and he responded that it was a little place called Bear Creek. I told him that I had a Great-Grandfather Lon in Phil Campbell, which is close to Bear Creek. He grinned and we became friends for life. He explained to me that his mother had traveled the 15 miles in a buggy to Phil Campbell to personally ask my Great-Grandfather to make a spinning wheel for her.

This quirky professor which wore a safari hat inside because the UV Tube lights would sun burn his bald head was a brilliant geneticist and a very good teacher. Under his tutelage I was able to learn about plant genetics and the hybridization of crops. I not only learned, but I really enjoyed this class and made an A. He made learning fun, which not all professors could do.

I would call on him from time to time and when in Athens I would go by to see him just to say hello. Late in his career I heard that his mother had passed away. A few months afterward I was at a meeting where he was speaking about Leaf Blight resistance in Field Corn. We talked about his upcoming retirement, and he asked about my career as a County Agent. Suddenly, I remembered the spinning wheel and asked if he would sell it to me. He smiled and told me he would if he still had it. After his mother had passed and before he could get to her side, his relatives had gone through her things and took everything of any value out of her house. The spinning wheel was gone, and he had no idea who took it.

Dr. Flemming was more than a little aggravated, as he should have been. But he still had the memories of his mother, and I still have memories of a wonderful relationship between a student and his professor. And I learned a good life lesson. If I can preserve a piece of history, I will, because once that history is gone, it is gone forever.

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**Around The Farm**

Mickey Cummings



## Chamber of Commerce

This holiday season is a time for giving, and our community has certainly done that. Thanks to everyone coming out and enjoying our Holly Jolly Breakfast with Santa, all the kids had a wonderful time. Thank you to United Community for partnering with us to make this event special to everyone who attended.

During this season, please remember our local churches, organizations and other groups that do so much to help our community. We encourage everyone to shop local throughout the year, but we also ask that you give local. There are members of our community that are going through difficult situations, so we ask that you give to our local charities and organizations that provide for these families and children. A special thanks to the employees and volunteers who work so hard year-round to assist those in need.

Remember to check the Chamber calendar for many of the Christmas events for the next

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**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**

Steve Rowe



## Mistletoe

Around this time of year mistletoe is sometimes a popular decoration in people's homes. You'll see it hanging above doorways for use by romantically inclined couples. Nowadays you can buy plastic mistletoe at stores to put up in your house. Let's talk about the effect that mistletoe can have on trees in the nature.

The origins of hanging mistletoe come from Norse mythology and Celtic Druids. According to Norse mythology the mistletoe berries brought the Norse god Baldur back to life.

You can find mistletoe outside on trees year-round as it is an evergreen plant. Usually in December it will become more noticeable because trees are bare after dropping their leaves. If you see a green bundle of leaves in the branches of tree around this time of year, chances are that it's mistletoe. In the plant world mistletoe is considered a parasitic plant. Mistletoe will send its root, called the haustorium, into the bark of a host tree. The mistletoe will take nutrients and water from the host tree.

Mistletoe is usually found in the Southern United States because it is susceptible to freezing temperatures, ranging from Virginia over to Texas and down to Florida. It can infect more than 105 different species of trees. Some trees often infected by mistletoe are maples, buckeyes, birch, hickory, oaks, and a whole bunch more.

Mistletoe can be shaded out by surrounding branches. Therefore, fast growing trees that can cover mistletoe from above will have success in preventing infection.

Mistletoe creates a large draw for water and nutrients on the tree. Mistletoe will pull these things to itself away from the roots of the tree. This process can lead to a lot of stress on the tree, especially in a drought. Mistletoe tissue will have 1.6 times more nitrogen, 2.3 times more potassium, and 2.5 times more phosphorus than the host tree tissue. During times of drought mistletoe water and nutrient uptake from the tree will increase while the rest of the tree is in decline. Research has shown that moderately infected trees can have a 66% mortality rate after a severe drought period. Mistletoe is able to pull water from the tree more effectively than the tree can pull the water up.

Mistletoe infections can be very common. Trees that are taller than surrounding trees and trees that are not densely packed in with other trees are most likely to be infected. Infections will be begin at the top of the tree and move downward and inward over time. Advanced symptoms on the tree of infection can be branch

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**UGA extension**

Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



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County Transportation system. The vans are air-conditioned, equipped with hydraulic chair lifts, and they are handicap accessible.

**Q. How do I make use of the service?**

A. If you want to take advantage of the transportation system, it is best to call at least a day before to make an appointment for the van to pick you up. Call (706) 439-6050; Operates five days per week; 8:00am - 3:30pm. Riders under 12 must be accompanied by an adult 18 or over. Rider must provide a child safety seat for all children under six years of age.

**Q. How much does it cost to ride the buses?**

A. Fees apply to all riders six and older. Prices listed are for one-way fares.

First Mile – \$3.00; Each Additional Mile – \$ .50

**Q. Can I get a reduced rate if I am elderly or disabled?**

A. Unfortunately, federal programs such as this do not allow discounted rates. Everyone

who rides has to pay the same price if Union County is to continue receiving federal funding.

**Q. Will someone come into my home to help me get into the transportation bus?**

A. Though we wish we could accommodate these types of requests, it is not possible. The Union County Transit and all 5311 programs are curb to curb service providers. This means that the individual rider must be able to get out of their home by themselves as well as handle their personal off-location errands. In other words, riders must be able to do their own shopping, etc. The drivers can help passengers from their door and into the bus if necessary, and they will help with the wheelchair lift when necessary. If a passenger requires assistance with shopping or getting into stores or doctors' offices, the rider must have an aid with them to help with these items. If the assistance of an aid is necessary, the aid can ride the bus free of charge.

**Lausier ... continued from Page 4A**

second home. So it seems to me that the tax base has expanded dramatically, Lamar. These new residents have brought rising property taxes, traffic issues, noise and light pollution. But the biggest problem of all is the explosive property taxes.

So here's an idea for our tax-and-spend Democrat commissioner: provide a full-time residency credit for people that are 70 and over who live here full-time and can prove it. We are here in the nasty months of January and the fun days of July. How about a property tax credit that would cut half of the over 70 age school taxes so the elderly can stay in the home they built?

Since the GOP-dominated legislature will not figure out a new way to have property taxes evaluated other than a comparative analysis, we need help NOW.

I think it extremely un-

fair and illogical to base my property tax on the sale price of someone's home down the street. The minions escaping from the blue state brought big money, which allowed inflated house prices, causing inflated property taxes for us all. It is a ridiculous way to evaluate taxes, and the legislature should work to have a more equitable taxation policy. But where are Stan Gunter and Steve Gooch? Clearly not working for the citizens of Georgia.

So Lamar, step up and work to find some remedy to the ever-increasing property tax. And don't tell me about a Homestead Exemption; it is a piddling drop in the bucket of mess that the government has caused. BOTH PARTIES DID THIS!

Between property taxes, gas prices and inflation, it is brutal.

**Eva Lausier**

**Williams... continued from Page 4A**

die-back, reduced tree growth, increased stress, and in massive infestations, tree death.

Early intervention is critical when dealing with mistletoe infection. If you simply remove the mistletoe shoot it will mostly likely grow back, so repeated removal would be necessary. Pruning tree branches that are infected is an effective method of removing mistletoe. Remove the branch at least 14 inches below the point of infection. Ethephon is as chemical application that is a plant growth regulator that

can be used to control mistletoe. Whenever you apply any chemical, read the label before application.

Control of mistletoe on old and socially significant trees can be important. Having a mistletoe infection does not necessarily mean that death is imminent for a tree, but mistletoe can have a drastic impact on the tree's ability to thrive.

If you have any questions about mistletoe contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

**Hambourger... continued from Page 4A**

sanctuary for the Jewish people, and a pillar of support for Israel.

In the centuries since Thanksgiving was first celebrated, it has evolved to a yearly tradition to express our appreciation to God for all the blessings in our lives. There's a lot to be thankful for: family, health, security, among others, but what is sometimes understated is the privilege of being a citizen of the United States of America.

Living in this country offers countless reasons to be thankful, and this blessing continues to enrich our lives in numerous ways. Through what can only be described as divine providence, we found ourselves born in a land – or made our way to a land – that champions freedom and democracy, something that people born in oppressed nations can only yearn for. Contrary to certain "coastal narratives," the United States remains a bastion of safety and security, and our right to self-defense and the practice of our faiths without hesitation or fear is written in and protected by our unparalleled Constitution.

But as a rabbi and Jewish citizen of our great nation there is another reason why I'm grateful to and for America: its unwavering support of Israel and America's Jewish citizenry. As the aftermath of the awful Hamas massacre of innocent Israeli civilians on October 7th continues to roil Israel and the Jewish community around the world, America and its citizens have been an overwhelming beacon of support for our most vital ally in the Middle East, and those whom it represents.

One of the most tangible forms of support is the robust military aid provided by the United States to Israel, recognizing Israel's integrity as an ally and its position as the "tip of the spear" against international terrorism. The United States has supplied Israel with weapons, and intelligence, ensuring that it can defend itself against potential aggressors. Diplomatically, the United States has been a staunch advocate for Israel on the world stage, using its influence to protect Israel from biased resolutions and condemn-

nations in morally bankrupt international forums.

While it's true that the President and the U.S. Congress have been exceptional in showing support for Israel amidst pushback from a fringe-but-loud minority, it's important to note that a country is only as good as its citizens, and our country's citizens have been so kind and supportive.

The messages and support I've personally experienced and been seeing across our great state and nation reaffirms my belief in the morality and righteousness of the everyday kindhearted American. Despite what the media will tell you about America being in decline, the American people are overwhelmingly on the side of stamping out global terrorism in tandem with its allies, projecting U.S. power on the world stage to thwart the global ambitions of our adversaries, reestablishing the vision of our founding fathers to check the spread of neofascism and nihilism currently in vogue, and doing what it takes to ensure a safe and prosperous future for all Americans.

In the context of Thanksgiving, the Rebbe's perspective on gratitude takes on a special significance. America, with its support for Israel, embodies the spirit of "Medinah shel Chesed" (a nation of kindness). The United States has consistently shown kindness and support for Israel and the Jewish people, and that has never been taken for granted.

So, during this holiday season, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to America for its unwavering core principles and support of Israel. The United States of America, by virtue of its people, is a beacon of hope and example for the rest of the world. Thank you, America, for being a true friend to the Jewish people, and long may the great experiment that is the United States of America continue.

I would love to hear your thoughts on this week's column. Please email me at yonatan@chabadruralgeorgia.com.

*Wishing you G-d's abundant blessings, Rabbi Yonatan Hambourger*

**Cummings... continued from Page 4A**

The Union County Historical Society will hold our annual Christmas Banquet on Monday, December 11th, at 6 p.m. at the Community Center at Butternut Creek Golf Course. If you wish to participate you must make a reservation by calling the Office at 706-745-5493 before 3 p.m. on December 7th. The cost of attendance is \$25. At this year's banquet we are doing something a little different. We need to raise some funds so we are having a live auction.

F. C. Collins and his family have donated a cabin to the Historical Society. The cabin was built in the 1800s and F. C. was actually born in it. Our job is to preserve it. We are presently trying to make roof shakes out of a white-oak log. Then we will label the logs and take the cabin apart log by log, after which it will be transported to a safe and dry place to be stored. Later in the spring we will begin reconstruction of the cabin behind the Mock House in town. But, the process will take a lot of money, and that is the reason for the auction.

Items in the auction include: a 28-gauge, double barrel Franchai Shotgun donated by Alexander's Store; a pearl and diamond necklace donated by Persaud Jewelers; Gordy Pottery, which is a favorite among pottery collectors; a

**Chamber...**

**continued from Page 4A**

few weeks.

Merry Christmas and remember to support our local businesses.

Thank you for making Life Better in Blairsville!

**Dyer...**

**continued from Page 4A**

ent from one area to another. It is everyone's responsibility to be aware and to be prepared. Winter Weather Preparedness Week is a great way to learn about winter weather and how to better prepare for it.

Residents can visit [gema.georgia.gov/plan-prepare/ready-georgia](http://gema.georgia.gov/plan-prepare/ready-georgia) to learn more. They can also follow us on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/ucfd1](http://www.facebook.com/ucfd1) for weather information.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

**Riley... continued from Page 4A**

away from heating equipment. Use heating equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Never use your oven for heating.

Have a qualified professional install the equipment. Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure the venting for exhaust is kept clear and unobstructed. This includes removal of snow and ice around the outlet to the outside. Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional. Turn portable electric heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room. Use portable space heaters with an automatic shut off so if they're tipped over they will shut off. Plug power cords directly into outlets and never into an extension cord. Inspect for cracked or damaged, broken plugs or loose connections. Always use the proper fuel in a fuel burning heater as specified by the manufacturer. When refueling, allow the appliance to cool and refuel outside or in a well-ventilated area. When using the heater, open a window to ensure proper ventilation. In portable kerosene or other liquid-fueled space heaters, always use the proper grade of the proper fuel. All new unvented gas-fired space heaters have an oxygen depletion sensor that detects a reduced level of oxygen in the area where the heater is operating and shuts off the heater before a hazardous level of carbon monoxide accumulates. If you have an older heater without this feature, replace it. If the pilot light of your gas heater goes out, allow 5 minutes or more for the gas to go away before trying again, do not allow gas to accumulate, and light the match before you turn on the gas to the pilot to avoid risk of flashback. If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not attempt to light the appliance. Turn off all the controls and open doors and

handmade (by the ladies at the Mock House) quilt made with material from the 1930s; baby quilts; handcrafted rolling pins made by Bud Akins; a quilt rack made by Paul Reeves; a cutting board; a guided Fly Fishing Trip; a muzzle loading rifle; framed prints of the Union County Courthouse; photographs of earlier days around the Blairsville Square; gift certificates from local businesses; gift baskets of local products; a gift certificate from Granddaddy Mimm's Distillery; and a guided Hiking Trip of local waterfalls led by some very knowledgeable people.

Remember to make your reservations by calling 706-745-5493 by December 7, and the cost of attending is \$25. If you cannot come but would like to bid on something in the auction, just ask one of our members to bid for you. You can pay for your item with cash, check or credit card, and we expect payment that evening.

**Goodson...**

**continued from Page 4A**

leads to an overdose and death.

The realization that you must prioritize your needs over your wants is the most difficult aspect of entering rehab. I never wanted to become an addict or need to go to rehab when I was younger. Having a family and becoming a veterinarian were my goals. I got lost somewhere on that road. One drink turned into many, which turned into an endless amount, and I had no idea how to deal with my problems. One of the hardest decisions I've ever had to make in my life was to go to rehab, but it was ultimately the best one. Who knows where I could've ended up if I had put it off.

Our parents will always regard us as their little children. When we are deeply engrossed in our addiction, neither our parents nor relatives can identify us. Our parents genuinely care about what's best for us in the end. They would rather not watch us battle anything, much less an addiction that could drive us away. It will hurt to miss one holiday, but everything will work out in the end. It would be far worse if they missed every holiday for the rest of their lives. No parent desires to bury or lose their child. **Mathew Goodson** Narconon

**Floyd... continued from Page 4A**

been rejected by Israel and the U.S. in the belief that it would allow Hamas to regroup.

Fundamentally, the administration believes that Israel has the right to defend itself against Hamas attacks and that hostages need to be returned promptly. But it also called for humanitarian aid and warned Israel to abide by the rules of war.

Exacerbated by the conflict, incidents of Antisemitism and Islamophobia have dramatically increased across the world.

Also, if Israel prevails and Hamas is defeated, what is next for Gaza politically? The Biden Administration still favors a two-state solution even though it has never been easy to implement.

To gain a broader perspective on the issues, in the words of King Abdulla II of Jordan in The Washington Post published on November 14th:

"If the status quo continues, the days ahead will be driven by an ongoing war of narratives over who is entitled to hate more and kill more. Sinister political agendas and ideologies will attempt to exploit religion. Extremism, vengeance, and persecution will deepen not only in the region but also around the world..."

"It is up to responsible leaders to deliver results, starting now. That work will not be easy, but it is imperative. There is no victory in the carnage that has been unfolding. No one will prevail unless the Palestinians are given their rights and their state. Only this will be a true victory for peace, for Palestinians and for Israelis alike. And that, more than anything, would be a victory for our common humanity."

This complex mix of problems will present a real test of leadership to the U.S. administration. In my opinion, they are doing a good job in containing the spread and focusing on the humanitarian aspects of the situation. It will be interesting to see how they fare as the war continues and

**Fowler...**

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ity is the story of how the rightful king has landed." He was so "surprised by joy" at this realization that he so named his autobiography. On this point I agree with Lewis. The essential gift brings joy. "Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King!"

whether any political solution will occur in the aftermath to finally resolve this seemingly endless conflict.

**Margaret Floyd**