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proclamations. The County Clerk also monitors official document destruction so that local processes adhere to State and Federal guidelines.

Q. Who handles Open Records Requests?

A. Under the Georgia Open Records Act, all public records are available for inspection and copying unless they are specifically exempted from disclosure under the law. Some requested records can be as easy as a one-page document. Others can be as large as a 150-page detailed county

budget. Lamar Paris is the official Custodian of the Records for Union County Government. On behalf of the Commissioner, the County Clerk documents open records requests, provides public record information, and documents fulfillment of the requests. In other words, the County Clerk is in charge of searching for, locating, and copying documents requested by the public. The Union County Clerk also ensures compliance with all State Open Records requirements that fall within the Act.

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Seeking professional help is a bona fide method of dealing with one's loneliness. The counselor can offer different strategies that the lonely person may not have thought of. In addition, the therapist can present goals for the lonely individual to help cope with the burden of loneliness. The therapist will have suggestions for the lonely person to use with coping skills, leading to a fulfilling life. There is nothing to be embarrassed about or any anxiety by seeing a professional counselor. It offers the opportunity in which to open up about one's loneliness. Seeing a therapist allows a person to become connected with someone who can be helpful. Telling someone that loneliness is part of one's life is a vital step in the healing process. "Placing one's cards on the table" connects the therapist to the lonely in-

dividual. A connection to other people or to a pet is essential for healing and insights into the world of loneliness.

Even though the technique of meditation places the individual in a state of solitude, it is a wonderful way to deal with one's loneliness. The time of meditation can open many doors of insights and freedom from one's current negative state of mind. Meditation is a positive experience of silence. It does not have to be frightening. However, it does require loyalty and commitment. It also requires an allotted time to evaluate one's life and to be willing to change whatever in life is holding you back from growing.

Inside yourself is a place where you live all alone, and that's where you renew your springs that never dry up.
-Pearl Buck

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and examine ourselves. What troubles me, though, is today's noisy rhetoric that attempts to blame someone else for all of the perceived shortcomings. Demonizing others is a willful retreat from the challenge of thinking seriously about the issues we face. We should instead acknowledge both right and wrong behavior, both from ourselves and from our leaders.

I heard a local political figure say, "I heard this on the news. I don't know if it's true or not, but if it is, we're all in deep trouble." Then he proceeded to repeat several stories told on a TV network. Each one had been debunked as false or misleading by impartial fact-checkers. No doubt his stories will be repeated again and again, each time gaining strength until they become "truth."

As with gossip, the practice of spreading misinformation is damaging both to the listener and to the speaker. There are few things that people like more than a juicy story with all

the sordid details.

Why do fear and anxiety provoke such unsubstantiated rumor and gossip? Is it stress and fear over the present or long-term anxiety about the future? Gossip and misinformation share a common thread – that of the unseen 'others.' Well, each of us is an 'other.' Pogo Possum said, "We have met the enemy and he is us." I believe this often to be true. Can we resolve to do better than this?

You can have the "good old days" of just a hundred years ago when average life expectancy in America was 47 and the leading causes of death in the U.S. were pneumonia, the flu, TB, diarrhea, heart disease and strokes. All in all, I'll take today's life anytime. Heck, indoor plumbing and life-saving drugs alone make the choice easy. Let's face it, if I'd been my age back in the good old days, I'd be dead right now. And let's be nicer to one another.

Frank McKinney

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the firefighter must perform a highly unusual act of distinction under adverse conditions. The recipients were Ernie Pruitt, Derrick Pruitt, Danny Roberts, Pat Schmidt, and Cody Allen.

We also had firefighter and fire officer of the year. The Career Firefighter of the Year was Adam Plott. The Volunteer Firefighter of the Year was George Hill. The Career Officer of the Year was Richard Jones and the Volunteer Officer of the Year was Steven Tanner.

The last award was the Chief's Award. The Chief's

Award is only presented to one firefighter each year. It is chosen only by the fire chief and is awarded to a firefighter who has went above and beyond the call of duty. The consistent actions and performance of this firefighter demonstrates the essence of the fire service and has a lasting impact on the department. The recipient of the Chief's Award was David Ueltzen. We want to congratulate everyone who received an award and for the wonderful job that they do.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

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and pure in Spirit came down in the form of a sinless man, thus having all power over life and death. Only God could accomplish this amazing event that changed the history of the world.

Notice how Jesus died – He yielded up the ghost, that is, He dismissed His spirit. Often you will hear the death rattle of a loved one who is taking their last breath before they depart this world into the next. Our Lord didn't go that way. He dismissed His spirit, meaning He went willingly.

Note several things that took place at Christ's death. There was an earthquake. Another was the veil in the temple, the curtain which separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple, was torn into, not by man, but by God, not from the bottom up, but from the top down. The veil symbolizes the body of Jesus.

We now have access to the very presence of our Abba

Father. No longer do we have to have a priest or preacher go into the presence of God for us. We can go directly to the throne of grace, because of Christ's death on the cross.

Let me emphasize that the only way to the Father in heaven is through His son Jesus. I. Timothy says: For there is but One God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ "Jesus." If you are searching for other avenues, search no more, my friend. Only one man died for all. You either believe by faith or you don't. You wouldn't jump out of a plane without a parachute. The same is true about Christ. You can come as you are and jump on the bandwagon of redemption or throw caution to the wind and jump into hell with Satan and his demons for eternity. You only get one chance in this life. I pray you decide wisely, for eternity never has an ending. Amen.

Frank F. Combs

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

Uncle Pick decided to take his young family by the weaning-off house to his Dad's house where he could find safety in a storm shelter. As Uncle Pick and his family walked in front of the weaning-off house, he noticed something flying through the air. It turned out to be a big piece of tin from a barn roof.

But, in Uncle Pick's state of anxiety, he imagined it was a flying saucer from Mars. Anyway, the tin landed on the power line. When the tin hit the power line it caused the line to short out and sparks flew everywhere. The tin wrapped around the top line, and as the wind continued to blow, the tin would wave back and forth and hit the bottom line. Each time it hit the bottom line an arc would occur and sparks would fly and make an awful growling noise.

All Uncle Pick could

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Jesus' resurrection means the believer's soul is in the hands of a loving Father, who "according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3).

Jesus said, "He who believes in Me will live even if he dies" (John 11:25). Annie Herring's "Easter Song" lyrics capture the joy. "Hear the bells ringing, they're singing Christ is risen from the dead! Joy to the world He has risen, hallelujah!"

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plant other things too. Perennials do best if planted in the fall or winter. Planting perennials in the spring means that you will need to do a lot of watering over the summer to make sure that they survive.

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

On April 10th from 1-3 PM the Towns-Union Master Gardeners Association and the Enotah Garden Club are hosting an afternoon tea with Ashley Frasca. The cost is \$15. You can register for this event by going to <https://t.uga.edu/9JK>.

I am also hosting a Master Naturalist training. This is an 8 week course that focuses on the natural resources around us. If you are interested in participating in that email me or call the Union County Extension Office at 706-439-6030.

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the movement usually describe it as a cult.

I encourage everyone to go online and research this religion. Don't read one article, read 30 in order to get a better picture.

To the organization aligning themselves with the Epoch Times and Falun Gong, I would suggest more study before endorsing a particular group's viewpoint. You lie down with dogs, you get up with fleas.

Bryan Thomas

Hilbish... continued from Page 4A

blaze. While the garage building was completely lost, their home was saved by the efforts of these brave individuals who worked until after 1:30 a.m.

Thank you all who were there, and God bless you all!

Kurt Hilbish

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the hope and promise found in the empty tomb. May you enjoy your time with family and friends and find delight in going to church again.

Invite someone to spend time with you and your family in the beautiful mountains. I hope that each of you will experience the beauty and rebirth that Spring brings.

Happy Easter, Blairsville!

Codependents Anonymous Weekly Meeting

Codependents Anonymous Meeting: Self-Help group offering a 12 Step Recovery Program meets on Tuesdays from 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Rivers of Peace, RCO 166 Josh Hall Road, Suite 4, Blue Ridge, GA 30513. All are welcome.


thing like them Martians."

Nowadays we can all sit back and laugh about this event. After all, we are more educated and think we have seen it all. And in certain ways I guess we have seen much due

think about was the radio show back in 1938. The sound the arc made resembled the sound of those monsters from Mars. At any moment he expected to be taken captive by the Martians. So, Uncle Pick would take his family back toward his house. Then he would think the storm was getting worse and he would turn back toward the storm shelter. Upon hearing the arcing noise and seeing the sparks he would turn back home. He finally got his nerve up and decided to push through to the storm shelter. Just as he got to the weaning-off house a transformer exploded. Uncle Pick just knew the Martians were shooting at him so he screamed at his family to run for the storm shelter.

The family burst through the door of the storm shelter in a sheer state of panic. Young Polly was squalling, which made all of her young cousins already in the shelter begin to cry, while the look on Pick's face exhibited an indescribable terror. His brothers looked at him as if to ask what had happened. He slowly began to describe what his family had just experienced. He finally blurted out, "We barely escaped some-

to the influence of television, radio and the internet. Back in 1950 we did not have any of those things, which makes me wonder if just maybe my parents and grandparents were better off without those things.



Blood Assurance: Local Blood and Platelet Mobile Drives
Upcoming April Dates

April:	4/01/24 ... Union General Hospital
	4/18/24 ... Union County Health Department
	4/30/24 ... Walmart-Blairsville

To register please call Blood Assurance at 800-962-0628 to make an appointment