

Effective Communication

If a relationship is to grow in a healthy manner, to survive long term, and to maintain its significance, there must be a phenomenal communication in the friendship.

Successful Mental Health Dr. James Ray Ashurst PH.D.



Beautiful Clues

In the light of dusk, I studied the bridge from a distant vantage point. The Hercilio Luz Bridge is an elegant marvel of engineering.

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Is the county still working on having property owners of distressed properties clean up?

A. Yes, the Building Inspection and Development Office has been working very hard on this. We implemented this program a few years ago, and they have made a lot of improvements.

Q. I have reported a distressed property several times, and it has still not been cleaned up. Why?

A. Whenever a complaint is made, it is written up and the Building and Development Office will make a visit to the location to do a formal inspection.

If the owners need to be contacted, they are given thirty days' notice once the letter is received. However, there are circumstances that can delay clean up.

Q. What if you find an actual health hazard or danger with a distressed property?

A. The county employees that handle these complaints will assess the danger/hazard according to risk and will take the necessary action.

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

Reply to Extremist

Dear Editor, This letter is in response to a regular Op/Ed contributor's last letter about multiple problems within the Union County Sheriff's Office

You were invited to bring your concerns and list of problems to me for an open discussion. You were also asked to bring a list of your accomplishments you've given mankind

As for our vetting process for our officers, they are all ran through background checks (State and National) and must be approved by

See Mason, page 5A

A Community Tapestry

Let's face it, everyone relates to music. Be it ethnic or generational, a tune will invite you to join in with its notoriety, nostalgia and rhythmic spirit.

See Kramer, page 5A

Emergency Vet Care

After a recent personal crisis, I found out that our area is without emergency veterinary care. The Mountain Emergency Animal Center in Blue Ridge has been unable to keep a vet on staff

We were told that our "options" for emergency care were either in Knoxville, Tennessee, or Cumming. Can you imagine your pet surviving a "true emergency" after driving all the way to either of those destinations?

I believe this is a real problem for pet owners in our area, and I would love for someone to help me come up with a solution to this problem.

Paula Ferrell

No Participation Trophies

The article about buying a stake with your deceased loved one's name on it, who served in the military, this is a level of stupidity beyond my comprehension.

Robert A. Nichols Former Infantry Sergeant

Questions

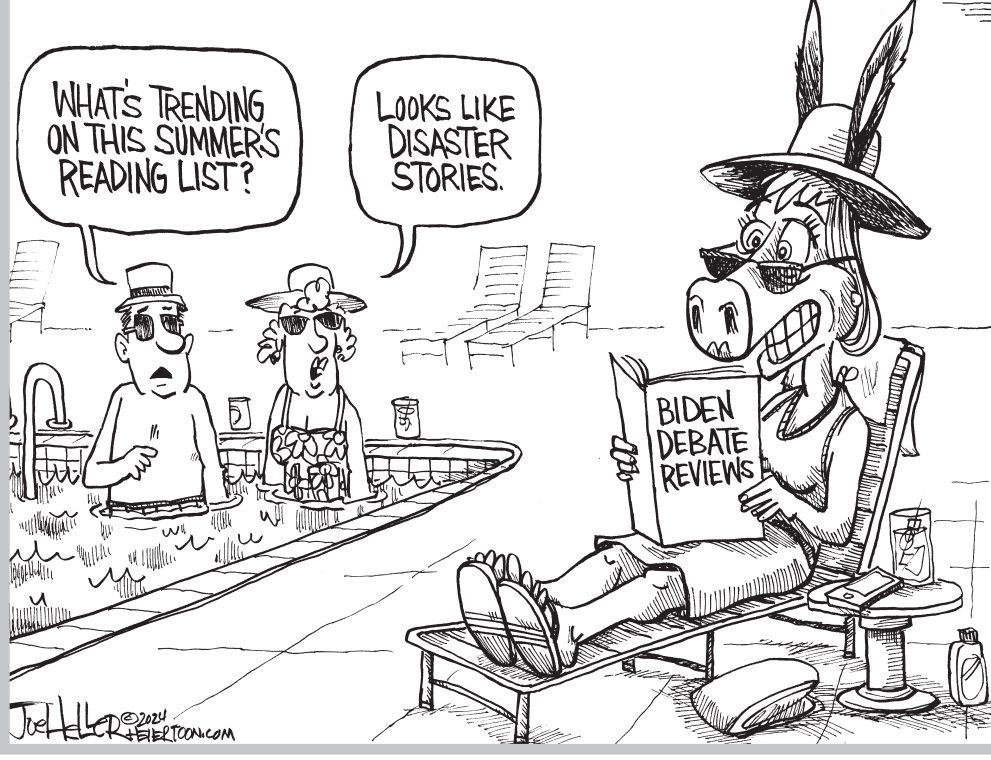
Who is responsible for the increase in food prices and other commodities?

Are food prices going up due to lower production of animals, chickens, etc., caused by weather, storms, etc., or the two boos that were on the debate the other night plus the large corporations using every available excuse to raise prices.

Homeowners insurance, car insurance, health insurance are all going up. Who's fault?

Who caused all the disastrous weather that is causing monumental damage to cities, towns, villages, etc., the two boos or climate change?

See Fasanelli, page 5A



Letters to the Editor

Presidential Immunity

I am amazed at the angst on the Left over the immunity ruling from SCOTUS. They don't seem to recognize that this means President Biden cannot be prosecuted for the consequences of his policies regarding the flawed withdrawal from Afghanistan

See McKechnie, page 5A

Re: "Re: 'Extremist'"

In a June 26 letter to the editor, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason responded to the writer of a June 12 letter titled "Extremist" by extending an invitation to the writer to bring her concerns, perceived problems, and other real issues to his office to discuss.

I had a concern for my safety here in this county and went to the Sheriff's Office to discuss and asked Mack Mason what the protocol was for reporting my concerns.

See Vandereedt, page 5A

Will You Remember?

In the June 26 edition of the North Georgia News, a second article appears celebrating that ALL children can enjoy free breakfast courtesy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Let's expand our thinking about "family values," and which presidential candidate has actually planned and supported lower paid working families.

See Snart, page 5A

Preserving Democracy

During one of our closest elections in 2000, George W. Bush defeated Vice President Al Gore. When Vice President Gore conceded the election, he stated, "Our disappointment must be overcome by our love of country."

Until 2020 our political candidates and elected officials respected our democratic processes and the rule of law. Currently we've seen the strength of our democracy and love of our country diminished by political greed, deceit

See Shirkey, page 5A

Skinny Dipping

The Baker girls were supposed to stay away from the upper swimming hole on Little Bear Creek. The water was deep, and Dad Baker was afraid the girls might drown in the deep water.

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



The girls sat down for a rest and began rationalizing the merits of taking a dip in the inviting water.

The girls knew their father, Dad Baker, would spank them for swimming in the upper hole of the stream. However, the water was cool, and the girls knew their brothers used this swimming hole frequently.

The girls were unaware of the presence of their older brothers hiding in the bushes. Mack and Rufus had secretly followed the girls through the woods to the swimming hole.

Delphia and Lucille left the water refreshed and proud of themselves for getting away with a dip in the creek.

Storage of seeds is very important to maintain good germination rates and seed longevity. Seeds should be stored in a cool, dark place. Storing seeds in a refrigerator can add several years to how long a seed lasts.

See Cummings, page 5A

Chamber of Commerce

I would like to thank everyone who attended the July 4th Fireworks display at Meeks Park. The Chamber enjoys putting on this display as it brings the community together and family and friends to celebrate the history of America.

Speaking of history, did you know that the Union County Courthouse is 125 years old? Actually, this is not the original courthouse built in the 1800s.

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



The Courthouse is steeped in history from the fire in 1898 to being saved from condemnation in the 1970s by three Union County women.

Life is Better in Blairsville and God Bless America!

Seed Saving

Seed saving is an old practice that has become less common in recent years. Before World War II seed catalogues that offered varieties of seeds from all over were not common.

recently, seed saving has risen in popularity again as a way to become more self sufficient or to preserve old varieties of plants that otherwise would go extinct.

To save quality seed is a bit more complicated than simply picking seeds from the garden. Plants have a couple of different mechanisms of pollination that they might use.

Some are cross pollinated which means the pollen has to move from the anther of one plant to the stigma of a different plant. Apples are an example. Self-pollinated means that the pollen travels from the anther of a plant to the stigma on the same plant.

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Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



See Williams, page 5A

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Paris... continued from Page 4A

sary precautions to advise the property owner. Our county employees are trained to handle a wide variety of situations, and we have a very large network of professionals if we need additional expert opinion or support.

Q. Is there any penalty for not cleaning up a property?

A. The county is not looking to cause anyone a problem or issue by unnecessarily issuing fines. Many people may not realize the state or condition of their property until it is brought to their attention. However, there are fines and even possible jail time if the violation warrants a severe penalty.

If a person or family cannot physically or financially clean up their property, we will try and assist them any way we can, including working with local volunteers or groups. There are local church groups and civic organizations that will offer assistance in the event of hardship. It is in the County's best interest to look after the health and welfare of the community, and it is an obligation we take very seriously. We take great pride in our beautiful community, and we consider it an honor to help look after it. However, we are a rural community and we do not want to place undue regulations on everything we do.

Vandereedt... continued from Page 4A

tion, I was met with animosity and disrespect by Mr. Mason. I have nothing but the utmost respect for the officers who work at the Sheriff's Office. They do an awesome job protecting the citizens of Union County, so I was surprised by Mr. Mason's attitude and response. I am not sure if he was just having a bad day or if he didn't like what I had to say regarding why I felt

a concern for my safety.

Mr. Mason invited the writer to bring her concerns and grievances to him as he will be glad to listen. Strangely, he also suggested she bring a list of her achievements. I hope if she takes you up on your invitation, you are not as rude and disrespectful to her as you were to me.

Cindy Vandereedt

Senart... continued from Page 4A

service is slow because "no-body wants to work because of Biden," how about remembering that during COVID huge numbers of seniors and poverty line workers died.

Parents who lost those family members that pitched in to help with the kids while mom was at work may no longer be there! Mom may have also truly realized "family is more important" than going to a job that costs more to go to than they bring home.... a job no one respects but expects for the cheapest wage they can get! Never mind the back problems, double shifts, knees that don't get replaced and chronic fatigue.

Also remember that you became really used to ordering whatever you want online with almost magical delivery. Those "people" you complain about within your habitual customer vision zone are out there on the road still delivering your packages that have mushroomed in the past four years.

When the floods, fires and droughts drive up food prices and disrupt supply lines, will you remember Biden is not a god of weather? Will you remember

the unimaginable cost in dollars and human strength it will take to rebuild a community?

When you fail to support the health of the planet or the health of all families, you cannot claim or boast that you put family values first. Will you remember to think beyond clichés and your own little piece of paradise here? The bellowing and blowing of candidate Trump is just that. I see no evidence of good funding from his past or the future for this area, but I will honor any that can be found. I still remember how to be respectful.

Jeanette Senart

Fowler...

continued from Page 4A

I was made for another world." Your desire for sunsets is never satisfied because they remind you of the passing of time, of another world. Today is in the books. Tomorrow's destiny is a bit closer. God has set eternity in your heart (Ecc. 3:1) and beauty is your clue that the Eternal exists.

"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; What is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him?" (Psa. 8:3-4). www.mountain-christian.net

Williams...

continued from Page 4A

insects will also feed on seeds if they are able. The oldest seed to germinate is a date palm from Israel that was about 2,000 years old! You should not expect your saved seed to last anywhere near that long. Plant your saved seed the following season for best germination.

If you have questions about saving seed contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu. There is also a seed saving starter guide on the UGA Extension website that has a lot of great information.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

The girls were surprised to see the same clothes they had left on the rocks when they went swimming. Mommy Baker was surprised to see her girls wearing nothing but their birthday suits standing behind the hen house. Mommy Baker was a woman who loved to laugh. When she seen her daughters she began to laugh. Soon she was laughing so hard she lost her balance and leaned back against the hen house to keep from falling. Delphia and Lucille told her of the events of the day, and they soon realized their brothers had pulled the wool over their eyes. My grandmother never forgot this event, and she laughed each time she told it to her family.

Please do not forget the upcoming birthday party (125th) for the Old Courthouse this next Saturday. Beginning at 11:30 a.m. the Union County Historical Society will be serving BBQ prepared by Clayton Reeves on the Old Courthouse lawn until 1 p.m. We have enough food for 200 people, and you need to purchase a ticket to receive the food. You can purchase your tickets, at \$12, ahead of time at River City Bank, the Blairsville Restaurant, the Old Courthouse or from a Board Member. At 1 p.m. we will go into the Courthouse and courtroom to listen to Jack Lance, Lamar Paris and Bud Akins tell us about the History of the Old Courthouse.

Mason... continued from Page 4A

P.O.S.T. (Georgia Peace Officer Standards & Training). That last minute tactic by your candidate backfired.

Most people in this county see us for what we are: hardworking, honest, dedicated individuals who are willing to risk our lives to save others.

I would like to humbly thank all of our citizens for standing with us since I have been Sheriff for the last 11.5 years. I have met and am honored to be friends with you. You are some of the nicest, respectful, law-abiding people one would ever hope to meet. Union County is home to many retired law enforcement, military, firemen, first responders, and others from all walks of life. Law enforcement, schools, city and county government, and Union General Hospital, to name a few, seem to be the main drawing cards. Many left the former place where they lived for a better life in Union County, Georgia. For those that don't like it here, they say third time is a charm. You might try moving again. There are a few things here I don't like (traffic jams, etc.), but I don't waste my time whipping a dead

horse.

We here at the UCSO are so blessed and thankful for the support the majority of people give us. They are our greatest asset. Without them, our jobs would be more difficult to impossible. Respectfully submitted,
Sheriff Mack Mason

Kramer...

continued from Page 4A

before lining up at the food vendor for their picnic dining.

Before the main event, young and old listened and danced to everything from Baby Boomer Music to Generation X and beyond. As I watched kids jumping, laughing, and doing cartwheels, I sang to the sounds of the 60's, 70's and 80's classics, my motherhood instincts kicked in as I had my eyes fixed on a child who called out a familiar name for comfort. Ready and willing to assist should he need it, my gaze ended as he reunited with family. One thing was evident to all, what separated us in age, brought us together as we looked up at the sky to watch the fireworks. Whether we were making new memories or reliving the past, our community bonded as we connected in freedom.

Lisa Kramer

Fasanelli...

continued from Page 4A

Two men blaming each other for events beyond their control and who neither of the two are capable of correcting.

This is the horrid, scary state we live in and overlook the sad state that is happening to our country, economy, civility and respect for each other that is gone in many instances.

I don't have the answers but realize that the people of this country can and must face reality and put blame, etc., where it belongs and stop the nonsense of blaming boob one and boob two. Let's not forget Congress who spend more time berating each and then do solving problems.

Richard Fasanelli

McKechnie...

continued from Page 4A

Nor for his failure to enforce American law regarding immigration, which resulted in millions of unvetted people being turned loose in the U.S., too many of them bringing cultures of murder, rape, drugs, and overloading our education, medical, and housing facilities.


Nor for his thumbing his nose at the Supreme Court by continuing to exercise a "loan-forgiveness" program, the authority for which the Constitution gives to the Legislature, not the Executive.

The Democrats should be rejoicing over this SCOTUS decision!

Carol McKechnie

Addiction Support Tuesday meetings

Refuge Recovery Meeting: Tuesdays 6:30 PM, 111 River Street, Hiawassee, GA; 706-970-7754. Sponsored by NMZ Church.



The Union County School System has a mission, mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to locate, identify, and evaluate each child from birth through 21 years of age with a suspected disability, and to provide appropriate educational services to these children throughout our county. This is for all children, whether in public, private, or home-school, incarcerated, homeless, migrant, etc, as long as they reside in Union County. We need your assistance to find these children so they can receive the help they need to enjoy a more successful life experience.

Once a child's disability is identified and evaluated, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) can be created to meet that child's specific and unique educational needs. For more information and assistance with free educational services that are available for children with disabilities, call the Union County Schools Special Education Department at 706-745-2322.

*Refer to State Board Rule Child Find 160-4-7-03

Babies Can't Wait (BCW) is Georgia's statewide interagency service delivery system for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. BCW is established by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which guarantees all eligible children, regardless of their disability, access to services that will enhance their development. This program serves children from birth to age 3. For more information visit <https://dph.georgia.gov/Babies-Cant-Wait>.

Many children are born with or acquire physical and/or mental conditions, which handicap their normal growth and development. Fortunately, many of these conditions can be helped or completely corrected if parents and others recognize the problem early and seek help. You can prevent an unnecessary life-long handicap by recognizing and dealing with a child's problem as early as possible. Anyone can help us identify children with special needs, including parents, foster parents, grandparents, teachers, doctors, nurses, counselors, social workers, day care providers, and community members. If you know of a child in Union County from birth through age 21 who has special needs, please let us know so we can get them the help they need to enjoy a brighter future. Contact the Union County Schools Special Education Department at 706-745-2322.

**Union County Special Education
July 2024**