

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Search and Rescue

Last week Union County had a search and rescue, and during that mission, I saw some extraordinary work from everyone involved. It makes me proud to know these people and to be part of this community. The following is a brief description of the all-out effort put into this mission.

Having a search and rescue mission is not uncommon. We average about 50 missions each year.

They can range from helping a person on the Appalachian Trail to a full-scale mission that involves a lost person and possibly several days of searching. Those types of missions are very difficult for everyone and require a large number of resources; multiple organizations; a great deal of planning and organizing; and some long, exhausting days of searching.

The search and rescue mission last week involved a husband and wife who were riding through a U.S. Forest Service road in the Mulky Gap area. They came upon a tree across the road and were unable to go any further. While her husband was turning the vehicle around, she decided to walk further and had gotten lost.

We were called and began our initial search Sunday afternoon. For the next couple of days, we investigated, planned, and searched the area. Searching involved using helicopters, drones, dog teams, horses, vehicles, ATVs, and of course ground searchers. We also staffed the Emergency Operations Center and Field Operations.

We had a multitude of people who were searching the roads and maintaining a containment perimeter just in case she was to walk out. Those were some long days of riding the same roads over and over.

The dog teams and the land searchers were given a division to search each day. Searching in these types of areas is difficult. Each searcher had to walk through the thick woods, dodge tree limbs, briars, spiders, snakes, and a number of other wild animals while trying to maintain their footing; keep their search bearing; and search for clues. It is hard work.

The search lasted for a total of three full days. The woman was located on Wednesday morning by a dog team who was going to the scene ahead of the other searchers. She was located on

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Work Skill

You can energize your career and impact your workplace with this one skill. It makes you more likeable and is a component of effective leadership.

Let me illustrate. Years ago, my boss dispatched me to the suburbs to meet with a city official. I was a project engineer preparing plans for a new residential neighborhood. I needed some input. I arrived, checked in with the receptionist and sat down. It was a beehive of activity, most of which was through the city engineer's door.

Finally, he stepped to his doorway and invited me into his private office. I expected him to be impatient and dismissive, given all that was happening. He greeted me, closed the door, and offered me a seat. His eyes locked onto my face. He received my questions and asked some of his own. I walked out amazed at how undistracted he was. I felt like we were alone in the building. His skill? Listening.

To be a good listener, you must be intentional. Good eye contact means putting the phone down. If you're multi-tasking, thinking about what you'll say next, or feeling like you're wasting time, then you're not listening. People may like stories but when you insist on taking them down the well-trodden paths of your past experiences... well, that isn't listening. When someone confides something troubling, telling your own story isn't listening - that's competing. Telling her she shouldn't feel that way or her problem really isn't a problem is not listening. Don't try to be a fixer when he needs to hear, "Tell me more" or "I'm so sorry this is happening to you."

Good communication means asking follow-up questions. As a leader, you help people grow by having them probe their own thought processes, not by simply telling them what to do. Your active listening assures people they can trust you as a leader.

The Bible has practical wisdom for us here. "He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him" (Prov. 18:13). "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips" (Psa. 141:3). "Be quick to hear, slow to speak" (Jas. 1:19). Behind these admonitions is the basic Christian principle of loving your neighbor and putting others before

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. At the last Commission meeting, you stated that the County will be getting a new website. Why can't we just keep the old one and save the money?

A. The County was notified about a year ago that the technology used to build the current website was going away. I have learned that technology changes quickly, and when it does change, we have to move with the change in order to maintain customer support from the website provider. In this case, the current company decided they are not going to provide technical support for the technology currently used on the County website. If we don't create a new site using new technology, we would risk losing the site altogether - especially if it happened go down. The Union County website is an official means of communicating business to the public. We simply could not take that chance.

Q. Will the Union County Government website look the same or will it be different?

A. A new Union County Government website will look entirely different. We plan to consult professional experts in field to help design a site that Union County residents can easily navigate. Images will be updated, and hyperlinked pathways will be different as well.

Q. What is the name of the company hired to re-build the website?

A. CivicPlus is the name of the company that will be building the new website. This company is a large well-researched and documented organization throughout the local government sector. When we looked at some other local government sites in Georgia, it seemed that CivicPlus built about one out of three - therefore, their processes have been tested by others. Our primary concerns were 1) that the platform remains stable, and 2) that technical support is outstanding. After doing the research, CivicPlus came out on top.

Q. Did you get references? Did you speak with other local government organizations to see how they viewed their experience with CivicPlus?

A. Yes, we found many sites in Georgia that were created

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

Following God's Direction

Dear Editor,

As a Christian, I believe voting is crucial, and the Bible offers guidance on representing Christ in the voting booth. However, I take issue with last week's letter "Trusting God's Direction" regarding these political decisions.

We are taught as Christians that the greatest commandment, according to Jesus, is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength." The second is to "Love your neighbor as yourself." These are the greatest commandments (Mark 12:30-31). It is essential to cease dividing our nation over faith issues. Prioritizing love and avoiding judgment of others is key. Our focus should be on loving our neighbors rather than judging them.

See Barber, page 5A

Trusting God

Dear Editor,

My first verses I learned in Bible class right after I gave my heart to God was Proverbs 3:5-6, which says: "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge who God is and He will direct your path."

First, we must trust God in all things and surrender everything over to Him 100%, because if we don't, we will struggle with our faith and not be in God's perfect will.

Secondly, we must not lean on our own stinking thinking. This verse is hard to do when we think that we don't need God in our daily trials and temptations. How foolish is mankind to think we are wiser than God.

Thirdly, but in all our ways acknowledge who He is. When we realize that the God who created all things has our best interest at heart, then our trust in His ways becomes our focus on the Holy Spirit that God sent to live in each believer's heart and that God is in complete control of all things.

Lastly, God will direct your path. What a great promise we have that God goes before us to lead us down the path of righteousness. Are you trusting God with all your heart? It's the only

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Rabid Racoons

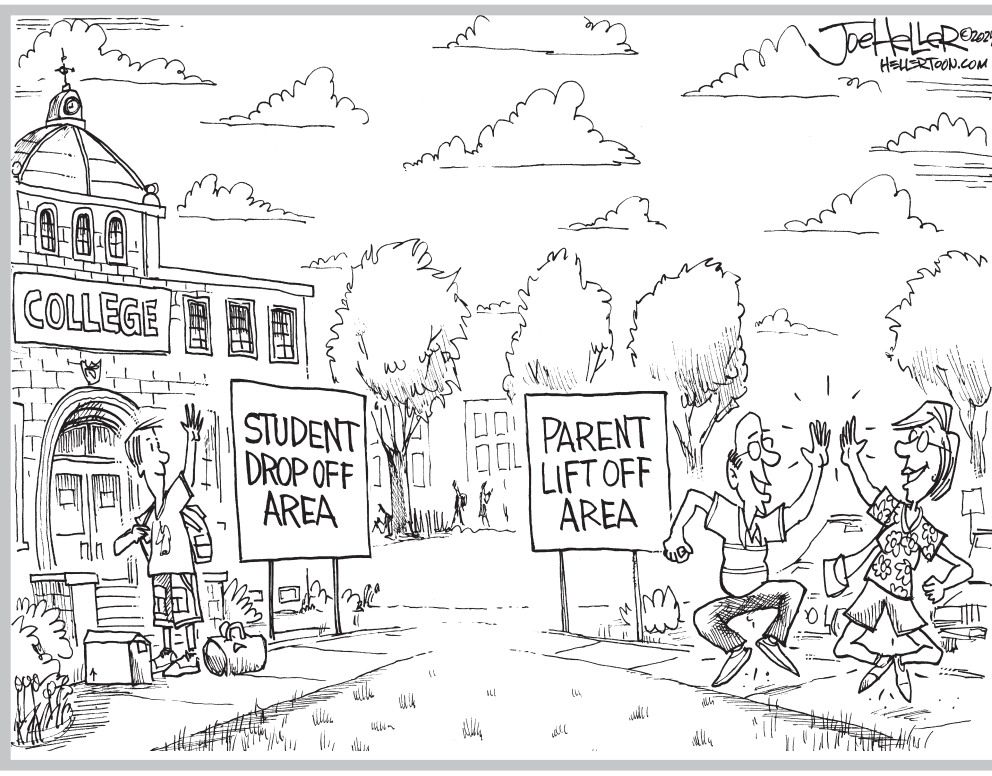
Dear Editor,

Have you ever wondered why President Trump has such a remarkable following? Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, many who haven't voted in 25 years, voted for him. Political leanings made no difference, and the following explains why.

You've been on vacation for two weeks, you come home, and your basement is infested with raccoons. Hundreds of rabid, messy, mean raccoons have overtaken your basement. You call the city... dozens of different exterminators... but, none can handle the job. But there is this one guy, and he guarantees to get rid of them. You don't care if he smells or swears or that he's an alcoholic. You don't care how many times he's been married or that he has a plumber's crack... you just want those raccoons gone! You want your problem fixed! He's the guy. He's the best, period! And that brings us to President Trump.

To millions of people President Trump is an egomaniac, a New York shyster... but we don't care. The country is a mess because politicians, judges, media, and bureaucrats are thugs. Be they Republicans, Democrats, or Independents, they're rabid raccoons. They're two-faced and gutless, and illegals are everywhere. We want it all fixed! We don't care that President Trump is crude, we don't care that he insults people, we don't care that he has changed positions, we don't care that he's been married three times, we don't care that he fights with Megyn Kelly and Rosie O'Donnell, we don't care that he doesn't know the name of some Muslim terrorist.

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Toxic People II

Negativity, negativity, negativity - the watchword of a toxic person. When one is dealing with monumental hardships, toxic persons are on hand to judge and to be downright mean through their sarcastic remarks. They have to put their two cents' worth into the conversation, and it's usually negative - sometimes even cruel. Don't expect genuine compassion from them about your difficulties. They can be ice cold.

Because toxic people are in a continual state of raw drama, their goal is to involve individuals who are innocently minding their own business. The toxic person seems always to be in the midst of a "human bullfight" - drama after drama, and they want innocent people to choose sides.

When someone lives in a narcissistic/entitled arena, he or she truly believes the words coming from their mouths are divine. They really aren't interested in listening to what the

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Comrade Kamala

It's no secret that our country and our economy have suffered tremendously over the last three and a half years.

As you and your family know all too well, basic goods and groceries cost more, utility bills are through the roof, and savings are shrinking. But pesky price hikes that have impacted everything from holidays to back-to-school shopping didn't appear out of thin air.

From the costly "American Rescue Plan" to the so-called "Inflation Reduction Act," the Biden-Harris Administration recklessly pumped trillions of dollars into the economy - igniting and fueling the inflationary fire. Despite all warning signs, President Biden and Washington Democrats shamelessly ran the strong economy they inherited from President Trump into the ground.

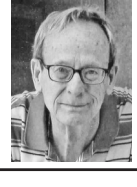
Why? To fund and achieve their Big Government Socialist agenda.

While we often label these failed economic policies as "Bidenomics," it's important to remember that Kamala Harris owns every bit of this mess. In fact, she cast the tie-breaking vote when these pricey packages were stalled in

See Clyde, page 5A

Successful Mental Health

Dr. James Ray Ashurst PH.D.



Troubling Times

The Pace Family had settled in the 1600s in Virginia close to Jamestown. They had worked hard and created for themselves a farm called Pace's Pines in the rich bottomlands along the James River. The farm was about 10-15 years old and had begun to provide bountiful harvests each year, and the family was doing well. They befriended a young Native American boy which had lost some of his family, and he had come to live with them. The family and the young lad were very close, and after a period of time they learned from him that the Indians were planning on attacking the settlements.

The family spread the word up and down the river that there was to be an attack on their farms. Many of the settlers were able to seek refuge in the established fort on the James River. The ones which heard of the impending attack were saved by the actions of this boy and the Pace Family. Many of the ones which did not hear or refused to leave their homes were killed in the attacks. Fortunately for my family, our ancestors lived through the attacks. I am a decedent of this Pace family, and I am thankful to this young man for warning them about the attacks along the James River.

Another ancestor of mine was a fellow by the name of Jacob Cromer. His father had come from Germany 20 years prior to the Revolution and settled in a place called Newberry, South Carolina. As you know South Carolina was a hotbed of colonial anger toward England prior to the Revolution. Jacob and many other South Carolinians resented the King's interference in their daily lives. Therefore, he volunteered to serve in the Continental Army. He served as a 1st Lieutenant under George Washington and spent his first winter in the Army at a place called Valley Forge.

We've been told that winter was a very severe time. Many soldiers didn't have shoes and there was little to eat. They all suffered from the cold due to a lack of warm clothing. Many of the soldiers wrapped clothing around their feet to help protect against the cold. I cannot imagine the pain and discomfort those Continental soldiers endured that winter. Frozen feet and little food other than the hard tack, flour infested with meal worms and molded meat. But, they endured, and fortunately for me this ancestor lived through this trying time. Not only did he and many of his comrades endure the hard times, but, they actually defeated the greatest military in the world to create a country for you and I.

Also, during the Revolutionary War, an- See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Fall Armyworms

Fall armyworms can be a menace to lawns, pastures, hayfields, and grass crops such as corn and sorghum. They arrive in the late summer or early fall. As far north as we are we don't get them every year, but this year they are here. So, let's look at what they are, how to spot them quickly, and what you can do for management of them.

Fall armyworms have four life stages. They over winter in Florida, as they can only survive a mild winter. Each successive generation moves northward, causing a lot of damage as they advance. The females will lay egg masses of up to 700 eggs at a time. After coming out of their eggs the larvae, the caterpillar stage, will be about one quarter to three quarters of an inch long. The larvae go through six stages of development. Each stage eats more than the one before it. However, the final stage of larval development eats more than all the other stages combined. Armyworms take two to three weeks to reach the pupal stage, where they go into cocoons. After about a week in the cocoon the armyworm moth will emerge. These moths will travel further northward and lay eggs repeating the cycle.

Larval stage is when they will do damage to lawns, pastures, and grass crops. At this stage they can get up to 1.5 inches long. Their coloring can vary from light green to nearly black with dark stripes that stretch horizontally down the length of their body. Their most distinct characteristic and the best way to identify them is by the inverted Y shape on the head. The point of the Y is at the back of the head.

Signs to look for are flocks of birds in the morning and evening. That is when armyworms will do most of their feeding. During the heat of the day they will retreat to the thatch below. The armyworms will preferentially feed on tender green vegetation. Damage from armyworms can also look like thin brown patches. One method of checking for armyworms is to mix two tablespoons of lemon-scented dish soap with a gallon of water, and then pour that into a one square foot area. That will irritate the worms and make them crawl up so that they're more visible. The soapy water method works on all caterpillars, not just armyworms.

If you have a well-established lawn armyworms may feed on the grass but most likely will not kill the grass, however the damage is unsightly. The only effective way to control armyworms is through insecticides, and even then, control will be very difficult on full-grown caterpillars. Therefore, scouting early is essen-

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Chamber of Commerce

Experience the charm of Union County at the Mountain Heritage Festival on Saturday, August 31st, and Sunday, September 1st. This festival is more than just a showcase of vendors - it's a demonstration of Union County's rich culture and history. The Mountain Heritage Festival takes you back in time to explore the heritage of Union County through interactive exhibits and traditional activities, including open-fire cornbread and soup tasting with a tour of the Payne Cabin.

Whether you are interested in historical demonstrations, traditional foods, or simply soaking up the festival atmosphere, this event is a memorable experience that highlights the best of our region's past and present.

Our Blairsville Business Expo is just around the corner, and with only a few spots remaining, this is your opportunity to showcase your business and boost your visibility. Don't miss out on the chance to get your business

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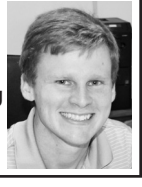
Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



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Newspaper Delivery Notice

The September 4 edition of the North Georgia News will be delivered a day late due to the Labor Day Holiday

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by CivicPlus, but we physically spoke with White County, Hall County, and Banks County. After speaking with the IT personnel from the different counties, we learned that the initial creative experience was good. The follow-up technical support was also reported to be good. During the process of speaking with the other counties, we learned that none of the government entities had anything negative to say about their experience with CivicPlus. All had been using CivicPlus websites for over 2 years.

Q. Who will manage the new website?

A. One employee in the Commissioner's Office will serve as webmaster, but the new format will allow pages to be edited by departmental personnel. For example, the Union County Fire Department will have one person designated to serve as the editor for the Fire Department page; one person will be designated as editor for the Farmers Market page, etc. This distributed responsibility will help us to update the entire website more quickly and therefore, the public will have more immediate access to website updates.

Q. What kind of new fea-

tures can we look forward to?

A. In addition to a new look and new navigation, the public will find an interactive calendar that will allow them to click on months and days to view events and meetings that are held on that date. In other words, all County public meetings will be available in a calendar format with searchable features. Related meeting minutes, agendas, and meeting packets will also be just a few clicks away. There will be a new format for submitting Open Records Requests, and the new site will be fully ADA compliant to the latest federal requirements.

Q. When do you expect the new website to be up and running?

A. The current website will remain up and will continue to be updated until the new site is complete. There will be zero down time in-between the sites. When the new site is ready, the domain name (www.unioncountyga.gov) will be redirected to the new site that will reside on a totally different server. It should be a seamless process to the public. The estimated timeline for completion per the developer is March/2025.

Clyde... continued from Page 4A

the 50-50 Senate!

Given the disastrous outcome of her decisive votes, you'd think Vice President Kamala Harris would learn her lesson. But instead of distancing herself from the Biden-Harris Administration's abysmal track record, she's doubling down on their radical policies.

Last week, Kamala Harris' economic illiteracy was on full display when she announced her economic policy proposal. Her plan includes instituting a "federal ban on price gouging on food and groceries" in an attempt to stop "big corporations" from taking advantage of consumers.

Folks, if you think inflation is bad now, just imagine how much worse it will become under Kamala's Soviet-style price controls. Our country doesn't need bread lines, food shortages, or higher

prices.

Moreover, it's completely disingenuous to blame the food industry for causing sticker shock at the grocery store. It's the policies of the Biden-Harris Administration that are responsible for the raging inflation crisis – not "corporate greed." Notably, the White House has played this game before, blaming both large corporations and Vladimir Putin for 40-year high inflation. Yet Americans didn't buy what Joe Biden was selling then – and they certainly aren't buying what Kamala Harris is selling now.

Bottom line, America can't afford or survive Comrade Kamala's radical policies. Instead, Washington must significantly reduce government spending and implement pro-growth policies in order to make our economy strong, healthy, and prosperous again.

Barber... continued from Page 4A

Acknowledging that Christian faith and political beliefs intersect differently for everyone is vital. Christians might make varied choices based on their scriptural understanding and convictions. Nonetheless, as Christians, we are called to pursue unity, respect, and love for one another, even in political discourse. Religious freedom should remain untouched by the government, regardless of your personal views on medical care or whomever your neighbor loves.

Compassionate love for our neighbors unites us in Jesus's mission and is not socialism. Christians should consider voting for the current Democrats. Many of us adhere to God's teachings. Supporting a Republican party candidate who neglects the commandment to love one's neighbor contradicts Jesus's words. We must recall that Jesus's teachings emphasize love for one another, not exploitation of our differences in the name of Christ.

Lamar B Barber

Ashurst... continued from Page 4A

"commoners" of this world have to say. To the toxic individual, the "commoners" are highly privileged to be part of the listening audience. After all, the toxic person needs to be right, and if it hurts you, that's just too bad. You will get over it in future time, according to the lethal person.

God never promised us a life of being surrounded solely by upbeat, optimistic individuals. People who are toxic in nature will make their nasty presence known from time-to-time. Whether it's a male or female, his or her presence will take place.

A toxic person will seek

to manipulate our thoughts, emotions, and actions to his or her way of biased thinking. We can become victims of their way of cognitive behavior, and we lose our true identity. They demonstrate a feeling of patronizing superiority due to their ego-driven personality. Over a period of time, we become entangled into a world of toxicity – belligerent, pessimistic, abusive. We hardly recognize ourselves any longer, and our true friends begin to peel off. The toxic person is destructive to be around.

People inspire you, or they drain you – pick them wisely (Hans F. Hansen).

Huber... continued from Page 4A

Our country is weak and bankrupt. Our enemies are making fun of us, we are being invaded by gangs, we are becoming a nation of victims where every Tom, Ricardo, and Hasid is a special group with special rights to a point where we don't even recognize the country we were born and raised in; "AND WE JUST WANT IT FIXED," and President Trump is the only guy who seems to understand what the people want.

We're sick of politicians, judges, the media, and bureaucrats. Sick of the Democratic Party, Republican Party, and illegals. President Trump may

not be a saint, but he doesn't have lobbyist money controlling him. He doesn't have political correctness restraining him. What we do know is that he has been very successful, a good negotiator, he has built a lot of things, and he's also not a cowardly politician. He says he'll fix it, and we believe him because he is too much of an egotist to be proven wrong or looked at and called a liar. Also, we don't care if the guy has bad hair. We just want those raccoons gone, out of our houses and lives, and now!

It's time for the raccoons to go!
Ed Huber

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

cestors on my mother's side of the family were working as gunsmiths in Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, the British Army forced my ancestor, Robert Baker, to make ammunition for the Redcoats. Unknown to the British was the fact that his own sons were also serving in the Continental Army. I have often wondered the internal struggles he faced knowing that one of these bullets could kill his own sons. Also, unknown to the British was the fact that he was making and supplying Baker Rifles to the militias of the colonies. Here is another example of a person enduring extreme hardship for a greater cause.

Less than 100 years later our country became embroiled in a great conflict. One that would have far-reaching effects for many years. Wyatt Cummings and his brother Absolem had recently purchased property in Winston County, Alabama. They were settlers, not plantation owners, in north Alabama. At that time the real political power in Alabama resided with the large planters of south Alabama. After Lincoln was elected and South Carolina declared its independence, the state of Alabama called a secession convention in Montgomery. Winston County elected a representative to the convention. He was to go to Montgomery and let everyone know that Winston County was opposed to war and secession. Upon entering the building where the convention was held, this man was thrown into jail and beaten. He was not released until after the convention was completed.

You know the rest of the story. Alabama seceded from the Union and war came to the South. People were sent to Winston County to encourage local residents to join the cause of the Confederacy. Encouragement to those thugs meant forcing people to join the Southern army. People's livestock was stolen. Young men were beaten until they signed up. Crops were stolen,

Fowler...

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self. "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).

For believers, good listening is a way to live out your new life in Christ. It is a skill you can learn, which helps your relationships at home and at work. I know because after thirty years, I'm still friends with a certain city engineer.

Dyer...

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the road in the area and it was believed that she was moving the entire time. She was in fair condition and was transported by EMS.

We would like to thank the organizations that were involved in this search: UC E911, UC Sheriff's Office, UC Fire/EMA, UC CERT/SARA/MSAR, GEMA, DNR, GSP, White Co. EMA/CERT, Towns Co. Fire/Rescue, Fannin Co. Fire/EMA, Pickens Co. Rescue, and Cherokee Co. (NC) Rescue.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Chamber...

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out there and reach potential customers. Reserve your spot now by calling the Blairsville Chamber 706-745-5789.

Life is Better in Blairsville!

Combs...

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way to find true joy in this life and the life to come in eternity with a God you can totally trust to bring you home safely under His umbrella of amazing grace.
Frank F. Combs

Honor Flight trips to Washington, D.C. for Veterans

Sponsored (no cost to Veteran) Honor Flight trips to Washington D.C. to see the memorials to the Wars in which they served.

Veterans do not have to have been deployed overseas ... just to have served during the War period. World War II, Korea, and Vietnam veterans are included.

Spring and Fall flights. If interested, call Paul at 615-232-4445. Thank you!

all for the Southern cause. One man in the community was hung twice because he refused to join the South. Yet his son found him each time and cut him down, saving his life twice. This kind of behavior and the fact their great grandfather fought with Washington to create the country caused Wyatt and Absolem to join the Union cause. Wyatt endured to survive the war while Absolem gave his life for something bigger than him. He died not from a bullet but from dysentery.

Fifty-four years after the war the country faced another crisis. The Spanish Flu swept across our land. The evidence is still with us. Go to any old graveyard and you will find many grave stones with people buried in the year 1919. I have found them where couples lost 7 to 10 of their children in one year. Wyatt lost two grandchildren in my family. My grandfather had two Aunts to die from this flu while he was a toddler. These two young ladies were only teenagers. Our family was fortunate to have only lost two people. Once again I cannot imagine the agony of losing children.

All of my ancestors experienced unspeakable hardship and the agony of losing loved ones. However, they endured to do great things. Isn't that like all of our ancestors? These people went through many battles to create a colony. They fought against tyranny and won a revolution to create a country. They endured an influenza epidemic to fight in Word War I and immediately entered a Great Depression of which they endured again to fight another Word War.

As I write this article telling you about what my ancestors experienced, a

question comes to my mind. "What will our decedents think about our time on this earth? Will they examine our lives and say we endured troubling times to do something great for this country?" The answer to that question is up to us. I would encourage each of you to trust God and do the right thing. There are people all around us which need help. Kindness is needed in this world now more than ever. Let it be said by our descendants, "Our forefathers got through the pandemic of 2020 to see great things happen in this country."

Williams... continued from Page 4A

tial. Sevin is an effective product that has been around for a while. Products containing Spinosad or Bacillus thuringiensis have organic options and good control of armyworms. Applying as late in the evening as possible is best because that's when armyworms will be the most active and pollinators the least active.

In pasture and hayfields use insecticides when you have over three armyworms per square foot. Products Lambda-cyhalothrin and zeta-cypermethrin are both effective but

have a short residual. Dimilin or Intrepid will provide a longer residual but work best on smaller armyworms. However, they will cease to provide control after a rain.

If armyworms are 1-1.5 inches then the window has passed for chemical control. Whenever using pesticides always read and follow the label before the application.

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