

## Chamber... continued from Page A4

North Georgia Extreme Boot Camp will be here to talk about fitness goals to start off your New Year! Expect motivating fitness advice and exercise demonstrations during this lunch! Register online or call the Chamber to learn more.

Would you like to become a Chamber Ambassador for 2020? We are currently accepting applications. Please call Jen Rushing at 706-745-5789 or email her at jen@blairsvillechamber.com to learn more about this exciting opportunity to be involved in your local community.

Are you looking for an advertising opportunity going into 2020? We have banner ads available on our chamber website, VisitBlairsvilleGa.com. This includes ad space on the homepage or on various pages of the website per your prefer-

ence. Call the Chamber at (706) 745-5789 for more information about this great opportunity to grow your business.

As we begin the new year and you are thinking about how to help your business grow and prosper, we at the Chamber are here to help you accomplish your goals. We are thankful we can help our members succeed, whether it's by celebrating their entrepreneurship with a special ribbon cutting ceremony, giving them a shout out on the local radio, providing them with a slew of opportunities to connect with their community, or by bringing the best speakers to the area to offer insight and inspiration to our members.

Again, we hope everyone has a blessed time celebrating the season with their families and friends. Merry Christmas!

## Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

Lonely people may isolate even more leaving them feeling even worse. If you are feeling lonely during the holidays, consider resisting the temptation to isolate. Get up and get moving even if it is just for a short trip to the coffee shop. The goal is to be around people because brief conversations or just exchanging a smile can lift your mood. You can also call someone who you trust and talk about how you feel.

If you're dealing with the loss of a loved one, the idea of experiencing happiness during the holidays might make you feel guilty or disrespectful to the memory of that person. We all experience some degree of survivor guilt. It's important to not let expectations about how you should feel dictate how you actually feel. Being respectful to those we've lost should include memories of good times together. A smile is just as loving as a tear. While you shouldn't feel guilty, it's OK to feel sad and to acknowledge to yourself and to others that you miss your loved one.

Missing the Holidays of the past is a common reason for the "holiday blues". Memories and traditions are a big part of the holidays. If your current

life circumstances aren't the best, you may get stuck longing for the happier times in the past at the expense of the present. Try creating new traditions. There are no hard rules for what your holiday should look like. If you're worried that repeating an old tradition will make you sad, reinvent it for the present. No kids at home. Make that family cookie recipe anyway and take them to your neighbors or friends. If it's too difficult to stay where you are, give yourself permission to go somewhere that doesn't hold any memories. Book a hotel in a town nearby or a city far away, plan a few activities, buy yourself a present or just embrace the good things in your life today.

Ultimately, beating the holiday blues is about staying "true to who you are". That may mean saying yes to parties and gathering, knowing that you can always leave if necessary. It means respecting your limits without succumbing to self-isolation. It means giving yourself credit for being as merry as you can. Above all, it means recognizing and being grateful for all the little joys and moments of happiness in your life.

## Williams... continued from Page 4A

cases were septoria leaf spot. Another consideration when looking at plant problems is whether or not it's going to kill the plant. Some diseases can cause a slow death for plants, such as root diseases. Other times, a disease like leaf spot on a plant in the late summer or early fall may not be a big concern because that plant is about to lose its leaves in the

fall anyways.

If I'm not able to identify what is going on with your plant I can send pictures to a specialist at UGA for free, or send a plant sample for a small fee. If you have questions about what's going on with the plants in your garden, pasture, field, or forest contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

## BRMEMC... continued from Page 4A

in being transparent and open. FAIR is requesting BRMEMC's Board to end its unfair policy of making members apply to attend or speak at board meetings.

It's time for BRMEMC to be bold and make board meetings open to everyone!

BRMEMC is a co-op and meetings should be conducted in the same spirit and manner as public service agencies – allowing the community the freedom to attend and speak – just as school board meetings and town council meetings are conducted.

Members should be able to sign up to speak at the beginning of the board meeting. And because board members currently do not address member's concerns at the time of the board meeting, there truly is no need for someone to apply ahead of time to speak.

FAIR requested the following changes: That the board respond to each individual who speaks before the board with a substantive written reply to concerns, not just a thank you note.

That the board revisits speaker's issues as "New Business" in the subsequent meeting to provide their official response(s) to concerns and allow for public discussion.

In the spirit of transparency and openness, the board cease its policy of limiting the number of attendees at board meetings. If more people show up than the board room can hold, BRMEMC should be prepared to move the meeting to its training room and have open seating.

In the spirit of transparency and openness, the board cease its policy of prohibiting the taking of pictures or videotaping during the meeting.

The board provide a comfortable enclosed waiting area for members, with a restroom and seating – prior to the opening of the board room. Members should not have to wait outside exposed to the elements or sit in their cars. More comfortable seat-

ing should be provided to members in the board room than the current chairs. If the meeting is to be held in a larger room, then fold up chairs would be understandable.

We are FAIR. Reach us at [www.FAIR-BRMEMC.org](http://www.FAIR-BRMEMC.org). If you share our concerns, call or write to your board representatives and Mr. Nelms, BRMEMC's General Manager. You can find them at [https://www.brmemc.com/Board\\_Directors](https://www.brmemc.com/Board_Directors)

Submitted by,  
**Lucille Heil**  
**Randy Mazie**

*Editor's Note: The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC contends that online forms have been planned since the board decided to open the meetings to members in November 2017. The original policy contains provisions to apply for attendance in person at company headquarters, via email or by facsimile.*

## Riley... continued from Page 4A

ties. A VFD may be financially supported by taxes raised in a city, town, county, fire district, or other governmental entity, as well as corporate and other private donations, federal grants, and other assistance from auxiliary members, or firefighters' associations.

With these funds the VFD acquires and operates the firefighting apparatus, equips and trains the firefighters, maintains the firehouse, and possibly also covers insurance, worker's compensation, and other post-injury or retirement benefits. Depending upon the location and availability of other services, a VFD may be responsible for controlling structure fires as well as forest fires. Because it may be the only emergency services department for some distance. A rural VFD, many times, are fortunate to include full time first responders on their off days from large departments.

Law enforcement officers may also be trained in these related duties and overlap with the VFD. A volunteer fire department is reached the same way as other emergency services by calling 9-1-1 where a dispatcher calls out the VFD. Average response times are longer than with full-time services because the members must come from different distances to the station or to the incident. Such departments often have a fixed number of firefighters on staff at times (we do 8-5 weekdays), which sometimes equals the minimal numbers recommended by ISO standards.

## Moore... continued from Page 4A

There may be those who think that our country is in the worst shape it's ever been in and blame President Trump. A visit to communist North Korea might be very enlightening for them.

The president is not a career politician. We have had, and will continue to have, those for decades. Look around. The economy is booming, recent highs in the stock market, very low unemployment, and building a wall to reduce the number of illegal immigrants – a sore subject with most Democrats – from entering our country

Most states allow both lights and sirens on a responding vehicle which is a red light and siren that gives the responding member the same privileges as other emergency vehicles, but a notarized state permit is required. Emergency vehicles must not break traffic laws even though they are responding to an emergency. They don't need to create another emergency with a wreck that will destroy equipment and take resources away from the original emergency.

If a volunteer has a wreck, then not only does the department lose that member from the incident, but EMS personnel will be pulled off the situation to take care of the injured member. Some departments restrict or prohibit use of such emergency lights, even when allowed by state law, due to the increased risk of traffic accidents involving volunteers responding in emergency mode.

More firefighters are injured in traffic accidents responding to a fire than in fires. Don't ever hesitate to call 911 if you think there is something wrong, but don't expect to see the red lights as soon as you hang up the phone either. We will be there as soon as we can and when we get there, we know what to do to protect you and your things. Up here we must learn to take care of ourselves until the cavalry arrives.

For more information check out [www.chestchattred.org](http://www.chestchattred.org) or [www.appcofac.org](http://www.appcofac.org)

## Schilling... continued from Page 4A

get rid of the Putin stain. The current impeachment hearings show more falsehoods being used by the Republicans to make Democrats look like they simply hate Trump, which they have done since he got elected. Actually, I noticed when he came down the escalator, the first day of his campaign, that he would become a horror as president. Why? Because he was that first day using techniques coming from the histories of autocrats to promote their despotic goals of stealing power from the people.

That tells me that the Democrats had it right; they, too, saw him as a rude, crude, coarse, amoral person who gets his way by bullying.

After Comey left his post

without proper process. There is not a question in my mind that President Trump has, and will continue to have, sincere recognition of our men and women in the police and fire departments and, last but not least, our military.

Lastly, in a previous letter to the editor in the North Georgia News, a writer described President Trump's followers as stalwart devotees. I am definitely one, along with millions of others.

Merry Christmas and God Bless America,  
**L.A. Moore**

## Fowler... continued from Page 4A

Christmas became my faith that Christ's coming was for my sake. The story is believable as a historical event, full of personal and spiritual meaning. If God can deliver His people and send the promised Messiah once, then He can deliver you from sin and Jesus will surely come again. Oh, glorious day! The promise is fulfilled yet the wait continues.

Reflect on that hope, and have a Merry Christmas!

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

church as a family, and we prayed before meals. Since then, Christmas has been a time of celebration for our family.

Christmas of 1980 was another special Christmas in my life. It is not the gift I received that made this year special to me. It is the gift I gave. It really was not even Christmas yet. But, it was sometime between Thanksgiving and Christmas. I presented Lauren with an engagement ring, and she agreed to marry me the next summer. I will never forget that day as long as I live.

In the late 1980s and 1990s came the Christmas celebrations with my sons. Each one has been special. One year Wade received a LEGO pirate ship from Santa. That ship was comprised of more than 1,000 pieces. Lauren helped him put the thing together, and it took them all afternoon. When it was done, he played with it about an hour and then took it apart. It took a lot less time for him to take it apart than it did to build it.

One year Will asked for a pumper for Christmas. Lauren and I looked at every toy store trying to find a pumper. We could not find a person that knew about a pumper. Fi-

nally, Lauren figured out that Will was referring to a pumper for pumping up footballs and bicycle tires. And yes, Will received a pumper for Christmas. Another good Christmas was the year we gave Sugar Bowl Tickets to our son Will. We traveled to New Orleans to watch Georgia beat Hawaii in a very convincing manner. We were able to eat Dreamland BBQ in Birmingham and crawfish etouffee at a great Cajun place in Louisiana.

All these Christmas celebrations have been special to me. Not so much because of the gift, but, because of the people around me. Please take the time this Christmas season to enjoy the people around you.

## Dyer... continued from Page 4A

ing prepared and taking extra precautions will help keep you and your family safe during this winter season.

Union County Fire Department would like for everyone to have a safe Christmas and Happy New Year.

~Union County Fire Department – Our Family Protecting Your Family~

as head of the FBI, he stated that he had never seen Trump laugh. In fact, I have only seen photos of him, even smiling, twice, once in Helsinki standing next to his hero Putin, and the other standing behind one of his porn star paramours. And have you any memory of hearing him tell a joke?

Now, I'm no psychologist, but I am sure that indicates a conflicted human being.  
**David Schilling**