Opinions

Everybody has one...

Green Address Marker

Was there ever a time when you couldn't find a friend's house? They gave you directions... turn left here, look for this, go three miles... but you still couldn't find it? GPS can even send you on a wild goose chase. Now, imagine that there is an emergency and finding this house could be a matter of life or death.

Over the many years of working Fire and EMS, locating

Fire Dept.

from Union

County

Fire Chief

people's houses was a challenge. The greatest improvement for finding houses in Union County was the remapping and the placement of the green marker, with address numbers, at the driveway of each home or building. The remapping, readdressing,

and placing the green address marker

throughout the county was a major change. It was started in 2009 using SPLOST funds. Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris stated that it was a difficult decision but a decision that has standardized our address number-

ing system. This address numbering system has greatly assisted the emergency services in locating your home. Commissioner Paris also wanted a standardized marker for

each address which can be easily seen by responding units. The green address markers are provided and installed by the county. When the county was remapped, every road was plotted, and

a number was assigned for every 5.28 feet on both sides of the road. That number became the new address for that building. The numbers on the right are even numbers and the numbers on the left are odd numbers. The number system can also help determine the distance from the beginning of the road to the house because every 1000 numbers equals one mile. So for example, if your address is 2604, you are 2.6 miles from the beginning of your road.

The green address markers make it easier for emergency services to locate your home in an emergency. The markers are used by the fire department, ambulance service and the law enforcement. They are also used by delivery services such as FedEx and UPS.

It is very important to have the green address markers posted at your home and that they are visible. We ask home owners to not move their address marker; plant vegetation or otherwise block the view of the markers.

If you need an address marker or if yours is damaged, please

See **Dver**, page 5A

He Gets Us

During the Super Bowl, two ads stirred up a conversation about Jesus. The "He Gets Us" campaign has been active since 2022. They have posted other videos at hegetsus.com. Spokesman Jason Vanderground told CNN, "Our focus is

on helping people see and consider Jesus as He is shown in the Bible." One of the Super Bowl ads features a series of still images of people yelling, arguing, and fighting. It closes with the tag, "Jesus loved the people we hate." This All Things

It didn't take a minute for a feisty political influencer to diss the video as "making fascism look be-

ad is called "Love Your Enemies,"

words straight from Jesus' mouth.

nign." Some of the images apparently show people she disagrees with, and everybody knows you don't love someone you disagree with. But that's the point, isn't it? Jesus loves those people any-

You can see reflections of that kind of love if you look. Parents love like that. They may endure loud objections from their child, but they refuse to let him jeopardize his health or let her be exposed to risk. Having a child's buy-in is helpful, but not a prerequisite for parental love. Jason and Travis Kelce love each other despite disagree-

ing. They were the first brothers ever to play in the Super Bowl on opposite teams. Naturally, each wanted his own team to win. After the game, Jason congratulated Travis, cracked a smile and said, "Go celebrate!" Then they both said, "I love you." Jesus loves people before they agree with Him or change their mind about Him. You hear that in His lament, "Jerusalem,

who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling" As tough as that kind of love is, it's the love He expects of His followers, "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in

heaven" (Matt. 5:45). It's a love that "does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth" (1 Cor. 13:7). To encourage people to embrace a harmful lie is not love, but a ruinous empathy. To love like Jesus means respecting someone's value as a

See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

Q. We have seen very little winter weather so far this season. Can you tell us how much it costs the county to keep the roads clear during a snow/ice events?

A. The extra cost to the county, while still an impact, is mostly within our budgeted amounts. When a snow/ice event lasts 3-5 days, costs can be upward of \$30,000. This includes salt, gravel and overtime costs. This does not include our normal labor costs or

equipment time and repair costs. County Q. How many miles of road does the Road Dept. typically scrape and apply salt and gravel to?

Commissioner

from Union Paris

A. The Union County Road Dept. only treats county-maintained roads. The GDOT works the state roads. On average, the Union County Road Dept. addresses more than 500 miles of road when it comes to ice and snow. Furthermore, when these events last for multiple days, the Road Dept. often has to scrape and gravel some roads several times. The county and state crews do a heck of a job. and we appreciate that so many of you have recognized this. The City of Blairsville also does a very good job on maintaining the city streets.

Q. How many snowplows does the county utilize?

A. Soon after I took office in 2001, it was obvious that during a serious snow, we did not have adequate equipment to deal with the situation. Over the first two years, we began purchasing additional equipment so that not only could we maintain the main county roads but could also scrape and salt many of the smaller county roads. Now, during a regular snow event, we have 2 large spreader trucks with plows, 5 smaller 1 ton trucks with salt spreader boxes and plows, and 3 F250 trucks with blades and salt boxes. There are usually two Rd. Dept. employees per truck. The City of Blairsville has one truck with a snowplow and salt spreader box. GDOT usually has two trucks and sometimes three, so we have about 10 or 11 vehicles working in our county. There is no other rural county in Georgia that has this much equipment. In the event that we have a large snow (over 4"), we also have several privately owned motor graders in the county that have agreed to help when we call. The hospital also has available supplemental equipment from private contractors.

See Paris, page 5A

Habitat for Humanity

A home is the strongest foundation for a family. The benefits of homeownership represent financial stability and the opportunity to contribute to society. Habitat for Humanity strives to develop successful homeowners through our Family Selection Program. The need for better housing, the ability

to pay an affordable mortgage, and the willingness to partner and volunteer with Habitat are thresholds of our Family Selection



After our December financial wellness seminar held with SouthState Bank, I am pleased to say that two individuals who attended the class are in the application process of the USDA 502 homeownership program. Neither participant was aware of the opportunities available to them and that they have a high probability of qualifying for a home loan. The financial wellness seminars SouthState Bank, Habitat, and USDA will be hosting bi-annually will promote awareness

See Habitat, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Thanks

A big shout out to all those who support the writings that the Holy Spirit allows me to share with those who believe that the truth is still the truth of God's spoken word in the hible. God's words are the inspired words of the Holy Spirit that encourage us to stay focused on what really matters, bringing others to the saving knowledge of God's ultimate plan for everyone. Yes, even those who don't see eye to eye with my belief, I respect your own choice, for we all have been given a free will from our Creator, God. I have said this before and I believe in my heart it needs to be repeated. In the book of II Peter chapter 3 verse 9: The Lord God is not slack concerning His promise as some count slackness, but is longsuffering towards us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repen-

Just like many false teachers would choose to overlook events such as creation and the Flood, the people of Noah's time didn't believe in Noah's warning because they had never experienced a flood, never saw rain fall before until it was too late. They forgot that God created the entire universe by His Word and the world is being sustained by His Word. Likewise, the world's judgment and destruction will also be by His Word, the truth. Yes, a lot of terrible things are going on in our world, but God Almighty is still in control, no matter what happens to this world.

See Combs, page 5A

You Are Being Watched

Dear Editor,

Kenneth West

"I see you," is no longer in question. Wherever you go or whatever you do, you are constantly under surveillance. As a young boy, my grandmother knew everything I did and didn't do. That was before security cameras. How did she do that so many years ago?

I love what I call one-horse towns. But one-horse towns now have security cameras at intersections and various other locations. In places like Atlanta, surveillance cameras can be seen for miles on the interstates before you get to the downtown areas. In a lot of restaurants, every bite you take is under scrutiny, so make sure you chew your food with your mouth closed. In large retail stores, cameras follow you all the way to the dressing rooms. Do they stop there? You tell me!

Perhaps churches will follow suite and install cameras in the Narthex areas so sinners can be spotted quickly and converted on the

See Vickers, page 5A

Shawn Jarrard

Publisher/Owner General Manager/Editor Advertising Director Sports Editor

Learn & Burn Workshops

The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy is a national collaborative effort to bring a broad cross-section of stakeholders together to address wildland fire management challenges. The Strategy directs wildland fire planning activities and has three

primary goals: re store and maintain landscapes, velop Fire-Adapted Communities, and wildfire improve response "learn and burns" are work-



shops for private landowners, consultants, or anyone interested in learning more about how to safely and effectively use prescribed fire. Depending on the location and objectives of the event.

"Learn and burns" provide training for participants to develop prescribed burning skills for forest or rangeland management and enable them to take the next step in applying fire to their land. Such next steps can include the landowner leading a burn on their land, seeking additional training, contacting local agency personnel, or hiring a contractor to

The goal of "learn and burn" workshops is to demystify prescribed burning through firsthand experience and connection to resources, allowing participants to feel comfortable and competent with prescribed burning. The events include classroom exercises, hands-on experience, burn demonstrations by professionals, and combinations of these topics. Participants are provided with several useful publications on prescribed burning, local contacts, and other information to use as reference material and to assist in taking the next step towards implementing prescribed burning on their property.

A prescribed burn is an event where a forest is burned under optimal weather conditions, at the right time, in order to put fire back on the land just as nature has done since the beginning of time. Man interrupts this natural process (Smokey Bear) by keeping fire off the land and gets nature out of whack which leads to a decline in fire dependent species and causes forest health to decline. Without fire, fuel builds up in the forest which can lead to destructive wildfires. Animals can't browse for food on the forest floor if it is covered with dead debris and briars, rainwater can't infiltrate the soil with a heavy litter layer on the ground, and things we don't want to burn are in danger with a wildfire.

A fire will clean the forest for all forest species to survive since many forest species, both plants and wildlife, depend on fire for their

See Riley, page 5A

Todd Forrest Lowell Nicholson

Show and Tell

Sometime around 1964 I found myself starting school in a place called Kanakaee, Illinois. School was not easy for me and I had a difficult time that year. Most of the difficulty was due to my mountain dialect. Kids could not understand what I was saying half the time nor

could I understand their dialect. For example, just imagine their thoughts when I would say that something was a "gaum" when talk-



ing about a complex situation. Or I wonder what was thought when I would ask, "What are you'nes a doing?" Most of the time people would laugh when I spoke. I was in a new place trying to make friends, and when I tried to talk, people laughed. All I wanted was to be accepted. I know folks didn't mean to hurt my feelings, but, the laughing was difficult

I was withdrawn and homesick for the farm. The only place I really felt comfortable was at home with my family. Each evening we would sit around the table at supper listening to Dad tell stories about home. One evening I asked Dad about how he and Mom met. He grinned, and as Mom washed the dishes, he told the fol-

Your Mom lived over in the back woods toward the Rock Bridge. They lived so far out in the sticks that they had to pump the sunshine into their place. One day I decided to do some exploring and took off down toward the Little "Them woods became thicker the farther I

went, and soon they were so thick I couldn't walk through the area. So, I climbed a tree and found a good-sized grape vine. I grabbed the vine and commenced to swinging just like old Tarzan. I had been swinging on them vines about an hour when I came upon an opening in the trees. There were voices down below, and as I looked down a gunshot came to my ears. All of a sudden the vine to which I was hanging broke as a result of the gunshot, causing me to fall to the earth. I could hear voices, but, it took me awhile to wake up.

'When I came to there were three barefoot girls and two boys staring at me while their Paw held a gun on me. Old man Bill Adams said, 'Boy, who are ye and who are your parents?' When I told him about Papa and Granny, he told me I was going to marry his oldest daughter. And that, young man, is how I met your Mom." As I went to get ready for bed I thought about my Daddy's story and decided to use his story in one of my homework assignments. I hoped my fellow students in Mark Twain School would accept me as a result of my story.

See Cummings, page 5A

Chamber of Commerce

Are you looking for the perfect gift for the person who has everything? Or maybe you want to reward your customers or employees with something special. Whatever the occasion, consider Blairsville Bucks - a local gift card that can be redeemed only by Chamber member businesses in our com-

munity. By using Blairsville Bucks, you are keeping money local and small supporting businesses in this area. Let's take a closer look at this unique gift

Blairsville County Chamber Steve Rowe



Blairsville Bucks is a prepaid Visa® debit

card that works just like cash. It can be used for any product or service offered by Chamber member businesses within Blairsville, Georgia. The funds are stored on the card and are used just like a regular credit card! The only difference is that it can only be used at participating businesses within our community.

The process is easy! Purchase Blairsville Bucks from the Chamber website, www.Visit-

See Chamber, page 5A

Plant It?

When to plant? That is a big question. We are still a ways off from warmer weather. However, that doesn't mean that we can't start thinking about the garden. Winter is a great time to go ahead and start planning your garden and picking up seeds. Let's talk a bit about planting calendars and when

to get started on that garden. Soil tempera-

ture should be our guide for when we plant. Ideally, for

@UGA Watching and Working Jacob Williams

warm season vegetables we want the soil temperature to be at least 65 degrees. Some examples of warm season vegetables are tomatoes, peppers, squash, and okra. Cool season vegetables can be planted when soil temperatures have reached 50 degrees. Some examples of those are radishes, cabbage, collards,

Some crops like carrots, parsnips, beets, radish, turnips, and mustard do better from seed. However, for most other vegetables using transplants is a great way for your garden to get a head start. There are a few benefits to using transplants. One is spacing. Not every seed that you plant is going to come up. For most plants if we have good quality seed we hope to get at least 85% germination. If you space out the seeds in your garden and some of them don't germinate you'll have wasted space. Using transplants, you know that you'll have a live plant in every spot. Another reason is for weed control. A transplant that is already up and growing with a developed root system will be able to compete against weeds for sunlight, water, and nutrients better than a plant growing from seed. You'll also put yourself a little ahead of the game

There are two ways to get transplants. The first is the easiest. Go to one of the garden centers or nurseries around here and buy them. The second option is to grow them yourself. This is not too difficult to do, and it gives you a fun project to do inside while it's still cold outside. The things that you'll need are seeds, growing media. and a grow container or tray. Fill the container with the grow media (a mixture of peat moss, sand, and loamy soil). Place one or two seeds in each cell of the tray, and then cover it very lightly with a little bit of soil. The timing of seeding is important. Tomatoes take 5 to 7 weeks before they're ready. Squash only takes 2 to 3. Peppers take 7 to 9 weeks. So pick your target planting date and back up from there to determine when you need to start transplants. I usually recommend planting outside in mid-May for warm season vegetables. Most seeds will need to be at least 70 degrees to germinate. You can purchase a heating pad to put your seed trays on to reach

See Williams, page 5A

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Derek Richards

Paris... continued from Page 4A

Q. How do you decide what roads to treat during a

snow event? A. We try to scrape/ salt all main roads first. We then go to the secondary roads, and actually do not apply salt on roads that are paved with tar and gravel (surface treatment). The salt will eat the tar out of the road with time and ruin the pavement. However, we do apply sand and gravel to those roads. After they get everything around town, the smaller trucks go out to each of the precincts and the 2 big trucks handle the larger roads like Blue Ridge Hwy., Loving Road, Pat Colwell, Town Creek School Road,

Q. When you say you use a salt mixture what is this exactly?

A. You are right; it is not pure salt but a mixture of salt and what we call 89 gravel (small diameter, size of pea gravel). For instance, during a one-day event, we can use approximately 60 tons of salt mixture for a total material cost

of \$4084. Again, a special thanks should go out to our Road Department, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and to the City of Blairsville, all who coordinate and work together to make sure the public has as safe of road conditions as possible. We also hope that for the winter we are in the clear and can begin the process of prioritizing our paving projects for the spring and summer – but we never know

Habitat... continued from Page 4A

and education to those in need within our community. The National Association of Realtors reports that homeowners have higher selfesteem and perceived control over their lives than non-homeowners. The financial skills and knowledge needed to become a homeowner tend to be passed on to future generations of their families. Areas with a higher percentage of homeowners tend to display a lower crime rate within the neighborhoods. Overall, homeowners tend to stay in one area longer, which has a direct correlation to positive academic achievements in

According to NLIHC. org, Georgia is lacking 207,000 rental homes throughout the state. By providing assistance to educate individuals and guide them toward homeownership, rentals would become available for others in need. Supporting Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties betters our community. Providing options for the families that make up this community is the backbone of our economy, and striving to enhance affordable housing is what we need to consider as we move forward

Riley... continued from Page 4A

very survival. A prescribed fire is carefully controlled by forest professionals with a well-orchestrated plan, under optimal weather conditions and is allowed to burn only where it is planned to go. Foresters burn many thousands of acres in north Georgia each year with minor damage outside the planned area (accidents do happen). People who panic when they see smoke in the forest can rest assured if it is a prescribed fire, it is well controlled by professionals with all equipment necessary to keep it safe. Wildfires are hot and fast and out of control and prescribed fires are cool and slow and under control. Fire can be destructive if left to its own but when its planned it can be a forester's

On Saturday, February 25, 2023, Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D along with Georgia Forestry Commission, North Georgia Technical College, Forest Stewards Guild, and US Forest Service will hold a Learn & Burn workshop on the North Georgia Technical College campus in Clarkesville. All interested parties are welcome to attend to learn more about the ben-

and nature's best friend.

efits of Prescribed Fire. Date: February 25, 2023; Time: 8 AM - 4 PM; Location: North Georgia Technical College, Clarkesville, GA; Cost: \$10, includes lunch; Who should attend: Landowners and others interested in prescribed fire, no experience necessary!

To Register: Register at https://www.eventbrite. com/e/learn-and-burn-workshop-tickets-224793943737; You Will Learn About: Why We burn; Burn Safety; Burn Objectives; Burn Planning; Liability; Smoke Management; Burn Weather; Becoming a

Certified Burner; And More! Join local experts to learn more about prescribed burning, experience and learn the next steps to improving your forest health by putting fire back on your land! Gain firsthand prescribed burning experience. Ask questions and learn from local experts. Connect to resources and assistance to help you burn. Meet other landowners interested in

Space is limited and the first 40 to sign up which will complete the class. We plan another learn and burn workshop later in the year in Northwest Georgia so if you are interested and miss this one, stay tuned here. We will also have 3 more in South Carolina this year. The first will be at John da la Howe the SC Governor's School for Agriculture near McCormick SC on March 2.

For more information on Learn and Burn workshops go to https://foreststewardsguild.org/ or https://gatrees. org/ or check us out on Facebook at ChestateeChattahoochee RC&D.

Combs...continued from Page 4A

The delay of God's judgment is not due to slackness, but to the Lord's longsuffering attitude toward His people, not willing that any perish. The primary purpose of prophetic teaching is not to satisfy our curiosity but to motivate us to change our lives, rather than working for things that will eventually be destroyed. We should work for things that are eternal. Sadly, folks who are untaught and unstable destroy themselves. Untaught refers to one whose mind is

untrained and undisciplined in habits of thought. Unstable refers to those whose conduct is not properly established on the truths of God's word. Reading daily from God's word gives us the truth in a nutshell that the good news of the gospel is for all who come to the saving grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Being preachy is being obedient to what God has called me to do. Look what He did on the cross for me and you. Can I do any less for Him? Frank F. Combs

Have you renewed your subscription to the **North Georgia News** this year?

Give us a call at 706-745-6343, or stop in at 266 Cleveland Street



Cummings...continued from Page 4A

Each Friday we had something at school called "Show and Tell." When my name was called on the next Friday I walked to the front of the room with an air of confidence. I relayed the story which was told to me by Dad. Upon finishing the story I looked around the room expecting a round of applause. A few of the boys wanted to know about them vines which Daddy used to swing through them trees. But, the look on Mrs. Kilbright's face still haunts me 55 years later. After class she asked me to come to her desk. I don't know why she didn't like my story, and to make matters worse, she gave me a note to give to my parents which requested a parent-teacher conference with them.

Later that evening I gave the note to my parents just before they left for their very first PTA Meeting. When they walked into the meeting there was much snickering and people wishing

Fowler...

continued from Page 4A person while kindly offering to show her or him the Kingdom

of God is near. Jesus is attractive because He loves sinners, not just saints. He has compassion for people even if their positions, opinions, and beliefs hold their souls in bondage, and even if

they disagree with Him. Why?

Because His way is true and

brings peace to a troubled soul.

And because He gets us.

"While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Rom. 5:10).

Williams...

continued from Page 4A

this temperature. Once the plant has germinated, you will need a way to provide light for it. A south facing window won't provide enough light, and will need to be supplemented. Supplement with a fluorescent or LEDs. Leave the bulbs on for 16 hours a day. You can plug the light into a timer to help

If you have questions about when to plant or starting your own plants you can contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

BlairsvilleGA.com, or in our

office. You can purchase as little as \$5 or as much as \$250 whatever amount fits your

Not only does using Blairsville Bucks support local business owners but it also ofters convenience and flexibility to both buyers and recipients alike. There's no need to worry about finding something specific that someone may want or need; rather, simply give them a Blairsville Bucks gift card so they can find something special themselves! Plus, there's no better way to show someone how much you care about them than by giving them something

from their own hometown! There's no denying that small businesses play an important role in strengthening our communities and helping keep money local-and now there's an easy way to support them even further through Blairsville Bucks! This innovative gift card program provides an opportunity to give an exceptionally meaningful gift while also ensuring that your money stays within our community and supports those who call this place home. So next time you're looking for a great present that will truly make an impact—consider giving the gift of Blairsville Bucks!

Dyer... continued from Page 4A

contact Union County Mapping Department at 706-439-6056. You may also report missing road signs to the Mapping De-

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Vickers...

continued from Page 4A

Some B&Bs tell you up front when you make the rental that cameras are present on their property and that all cameras aren't automatically easy to spot. They maybe in a light fixture or some other object that conceals them. They go on to tell you that the cameras are not in the private areas. Why would I believe that?

The bottom line is this: Watch yourself, because someone else is already watching you as well.

Gene Vickers

to meet the young couple from Alabama. It seemed that every person there wanted to meet my parents. Dad thought everyone was being friendly until he noticed that everyone would ask a question just to get him to talk. Then somebody asked him about swinging on wild grape vines. On their way home Dad told Mom he was of a great mind to give me a spanking. But, she told him that he had caused the problem by telling

me that wild tale.

The next morning Mom and Dad went to the parent/ teacher conference with Mrs. Kilbright. It was not a good conference. My parents were told that I would fail the first grade even though the school year was not even to the month of October. She further explained that their little boy was nothing but a dumb hillbilly from Alabama and everyone knew that people from Appalachia were dumb. Finally, she said that I was a boy and everyone knew that little boys were dumber than little girls.

Dad came unglued and chased the teacher out of the room. One of his friends also happened to be the Principal of Mark Twain School. The man managed to calm my father down to a level at which he could act sensibly, and my parents decided then and there that we needed to move back south to a place where people could understand our talk. Now, you might think that I would harbour much animosity toward Mrs. Kilbright, but, the way I look at it, she made sure we moved back home. Without her help I might sill be living in Kanakee,