# **Opinions**

### Everybody has one...

#### Letter Drive

The first week of April is usually when I write something about the annual volunteer fire department letter drive and to put out a reminder for folks to be looking for this letter. It usually arrives sometime in the first weeks of April. Every year, the volunteer fire stations send out a letter to the home, business, and property owners who are protected by these local volunteer stations.

The letter serves several purposes. It informs the people of the operations of the stations. The letter provides information including the number of members; the number of calls; any changes to the stations; any equipment purchases; and any needs that the station may have. They also



provide information on the future goals of the station to better re-

spond to emergencies and serve the community. The letter also provides dates and times for each fire station's annual open house. This is an invitation for the people to visit the

fire station. The volunteer firefighters display the station, the apparatus and the equipment. They are available to answer questions. Often there are educational displays and demonstrations of fire and The main purpose of the letter is to ask for donations. Al-

though the fire department's budget pays for utilities and maintenance, most of the volunteers' purchases and operations are made possible through donations. The annual letter drive is the main source of donations for the volunteer stations. The volunteer stations survive on the generous donations provided by the citizens and business owners of their coverage area. They use the donations to purchase radios, turnout gear,

wildland gear, and various other firefighting and rescue equipment. They also use the funds to purchase fire apparatus, rescue trucks, and to make improvements to the stations. Every donation is needed to keep the volunteer stations

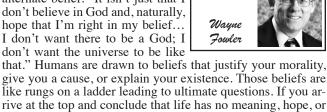
operational; to achieve future goals; and to respond to emergencies throughout the county. The volunteers do not ask for a dollar amount. They ask citizens and business owners to donate what they can to assist the stations in serving their community. The continued support from the citizens, business owners and the community is greatly appreciated by the dedicated volunteers and the department.

See **Dver**, page 5A

#### **Help My Unbelief**

Tim Keller tells the story of Kevin, who worked on Wall Street at J.P. Morgan. Kevin was an atheist with stubborn doubts about God. But he had doubts about his doubts, so he and his wife began attending Redeemer Church. They met believers who were smart and sophisticated. This challenged their thoughts about God.

A doubt is actually a belief in something else. Philosopher Thomas Nagel explained his doubts as an alternate belief. "It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief... I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like



All Things

New

liefs (i.e., doubts). And like Kevin, you need not do this alone. Consider Jesus' response to Thomas. After Jesus' resurrection, Thomas declared that unless he saw Jesus for himself, "I will not believe." He doubted. Jesus didn't show impatience or anger. He came to Thomas and invited him not only to see, but touch. Thomas, no longer doubting exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" For your benefit, Jesus then said, "Blessed are they who did not see and yet believed" (John 20). Jesus reveals the kingdom of heaven to doubters who seek. "Whoever has," He said, "to him more shall be given" (Matt. 13). In Him doubters find answers to the ultimate questions of life.

joy, then dear reader it's time to take a fresh look at your be-

Believers should not dismiss the skepticism of our fellow travelers. Let's give a wide berth to condescension and disrespect. Jesus kindly engaged doubt. So should you, even if it's only a simple explanation of the evidence for God you find convincing. Believers have the advantage – we are participating in a grand enterprise empowered by God. His kingdom comes on earth as people believe Jesus for eternal life.

Kevin tells the rest of his story. "As an atheist I thought I lived a moral... kind of life, but Christianity had an even higher standard. While sitting in a coffee shop reading C.S.

See Fowler, page 5A

#### **Commissioner's Questions**

The questions we are addressing this week pertain to the Tax Commissioner's Office. Lee Knight, Union County Tax Commissioner, provided the following information in answer to questions related to his office. We are very proud of the work they do for Union County residents. Q. What is required for me to register my vehicle in

Union County when I buy a vehicle or if I am moving here from another county or from another state? County A. First you need a Georgia Driver's License showing Union

Commissioner County as your residence, proof of a Georgia insurance policy, your title Paris

or lienholder information, and person who's name the title will be registered in. Union County tax commissioner will register vehicles here if you hold an out of state driver's license and you own a 2nd home in Union County. If you are moving here from another county in Georgia, you only need to update the address on your Georgia driver's license and bring it into our office to transfer your registration to Union County.

Q. What is the cost to register my vehicle in Union

A. To title and register a vehicle Georgia has a Title Ad Valorem Tax (TAVT) which is 7.0% of the purchase price from a dealer minus the trade-in amount and collected at the time of purchase. If purchased from an individual the TAVT is 7.0% of the NADA clean retail value. The title fee is \$18.00 and \$20.00 for the tag plate. The annual registration is also \$20.00 a year and the renewal is on or before your birthday. When moving here from another state and transferring your vehicles to Georgia the TAVT rate is 3% of the vehicle value per NADA.

Q. How do I register my Multipurpose Off-Highway Vehicle (side-by-side/MPOHV) now that Georgia allows us to tag them for limited highway use?

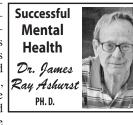
A. Starting December 1, 2023, Georgia allows you to register and tag MPOHVs. First, owners will need minimum liability auto insurance. Registration is voluntary and MPOHVs will not be titled. The cost for registration is \$20.00 with a \$20 annual registration fee. The MPOHVs will have to meet certain requirements such as seat belts, headlights, brake lights, and rearview

See Paris, page 5A

#### Recovery from Loneliness

Recovery from Loneliness is the goal. For certain, keeping busy is essential. It is an excellent way to distract oneself from the miserable arena that contains the loneliness. Invent personal projects that require you to invest yourself, such as cleaning out your household

stuff or re-orgaets. Having a To-Do list of projects will keep mind healthy and occupied. Also, things that hold your interest. The



suggestions made in this article can be just words on paper. Each of the suggestions can work because each one connects the lonely individual to another human being or to a pet. The choice belongs to the individual!

We are all lonely at times even when everything in our lives seems to be going right. Remember, loneliness can occur in a crowd or simply on a trip away from our friends or fam-

See Ashurst, page 5A

#### Letters to the Editor

#### **Re: Epoch Times**

I noticed that a reader went to a lot of trouble to besmirch the Epoch Times for its relationship with the Falun Gong religion. A slow news

day, I suppose. The newspaper and news service originated as a counter to Chinese CCP-run news outlets. Hardly a disreputable beginning.

Now it's a respected U.S. newspaper with a decidedly conservative leaning celebrating traditional American values and the family.

Other news outlets have also confirmed that the Congressional Jan. 6 hearings intentionally omitted much information; indeed, the committee destroyed video and other evidence.

Thousands of visitors on the Capitol

See **Tarter** page 5A

#### **Democrat Party**

#### Dear Editor,

So you have voted Democrat for a long time, as did your Mom and Dad. Mine too. Back then, almost all the country voted for the party that was for the working man, the Democrat Party. But then something happened. What? I have several opinions but will leave the research to the professional class to break down.

A recent letter to the editor asked why so many people here in this county support President Trump, and someone answered that letter. My question is: Why do people hate him so much? He's not perfect, neither are any of us. But a deeper question is: If you are still voting Democrat, do you really believe in the values of the national Democrat Party?

Do you truly believe that babies should be aborted even if they can survive outside the womb, even into the 8-9 months? Are you re-

See Lausier, page 5A

#### **Exposing Threats to Nation**

One of the greatest gifts our Founding Fathers endowed us with is the right of free expression and assembly. We appreciate Bryan Thomas' letter last week but wonder if his complaint is with the source or the content since he sent it to the newspaper before the movie was even shown at the Blairsville Cinema?

Considering that the owner of Epoch Times is Chinese, having Chinese culture and beliefs is not that strange. However, if you do some research, as suggested, you find "The practitioners of Falun Gong cultivate their hearts according to the principle of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance to obtain wisdom

See Yohe, page 5A

### Biden is Coming...

ANOTHER OUT-OF-CONTROL

FORCE HITS THE BRIDGE

Biden Is Coming for Your Car Keys It's official: President Biden is coming

Despite receiving intense backlash for its proposed regulations pertaining to gaspowered cars, the Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA) finalized the radical rule last m o n t h White House's policy enacts aggressive emission



standards - requiring automakers to ensure 56% of light-duty car sales are battery electric and another 13% are hybrid by 2032.

In other words, President Biden is forcing a de facto electric vehicle (EV) mandate on our country.

Make no mistake, this escalation represents the President's latest appearement of environmental extremists. Time and time again, the Biden Administration doubles down on the Left's radical Green New Deal agenda - no matter the costs or consequences.

Folks, Biden's EV takeover is alarming for several reasons. First and foremost, this rule dangerously expands government control over Americans' daily lives. You and your family deserve the freedom to decide what car you purchase and drive. It should always be your decision - not the federal government's

Plus, the EPA's EV rule unnecessarily imposes a hefty financial burden on workers and families already struggling from Bidenomics. According to the North American Auto Dealers Association, the five-year cost to own an average electric vehicle is more than \$92,000. That's over \$15,000 more than a typical gas-powered vehicle during the same period. It's simply outrageous to force expensive and often unreliable EVs on the American

Yet while Biden's EV mandate hurts American families, it enriches one of our top adversaries: Communist China. Notably, China controls the vast majority of critical minerals mining, processing, and manufacturing for electric vehicles. Given China's stranglehold on the EV supply chain, the Biden Administration's crackdown on gas-powered cars will inevitably enrich our adversary and hand China more control over the global market.

Due to my serious concerns, I've been leading the charge against the EPA's radical regulations. In the Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations process, I offered an amendment to prohibit taxpayer dollars from being used to

See Clyde, page 5A

#### Doc Underwood & Clifford

I have told you may times about my Great-Grandfather, Clifford Hyde, who was from Dawson County, Georgia. His mother was a full-blood Cherokee and both Clifford's father and grandfather had fought with a group of Georgia Volunteers during the "War of

Northern Aggression," as he liked to call it. As a young man Clifford was working around Cumming when he got into trouble



Clifford was sowing some "wild oats" as many young people are prone to do. He loved the taste of moonshine, and one evening he'd consumed too much. Moonshine can make you believe you are stronger than you actually are, and on this night the moonshine made Clifford think he could whip anybody. He and another man were involved in a brawl. The other man was left on the floor bleeding and presumed dead. So, my great-grandfather fled Atlanta and traveled to North Alabama. Later in life he found out the other man had lived, but, he had already married and was raising a family in the little town of Phil Campbell, Alabama.

His favorite hobby was Turkey hunting. Clifford used one of the wing bones to make a call, and up into his 80s, he was able to call up and shoot gobblers. Dad told me that he would drive him over to the James Place where the old man would wobble down to Turkey Creek. Clifford would sit with his back against a rock bluff and pull out the wing-bone caller. Usually within about an hour Dad would hear the note of the old "Long Tom" shotgun. Dad would walk to where the old man was sitting whereupon he would receive instructions to the location of the dead bird. Dad said, "Clifford never failed to get a bird until he could no longer make the walk to Turkey Creek."

Clifford was also a bee charmer. He would place a Coca-Cola cap containing honey on the ground and watch until a bee found it. The old man would watch the direction in which the bee flew after leaving the bottle cap and then he would walk in that direction for a couple of hundred yards. He would then sit down and place another honey-filled bottle cap on the ground. He would repeat this process until the bee tree was located, after which the tree was chopped down and robbed of its honey. Also, he and his sons would gather up the queen and place her in a box. They would then carry the bees to a bee gum where they would place them and raise their own bees and honey for next year. It is astonishing that Clifford never wore any protective gear during the rob-

See Cummings, page 5A

### **Chamber of Commerce**

On April 8th, Blairsville will be treated to a rare celestial event as a total eclipse unfolds. During this phenomenon, the moon will pass between the sun and the Earth, casting a shadow over the sun, creating an awe-inspiring moment of darkness. While this eclipse won't take us into

complete darkness as the memorable event in August 2017 did, the period between 2:29 PM and 3:06 PM promises to be a spectacle worth wit-

Blairsville County Chambei Steve Rowe



nessing. However, it's crucial that you have approved viewing glasses to protect your eyes from any potential damage. Check your glasses thoroughly for any signs of damage such as holes or scratches, and look for the ISO 12312-2 rating printed on the inside to confirm their safety. Our animals and wildlife may also be af-

fected by the sudden change in darkness during the eclipse. Avoid disturbing animals and be mindful of their behavior during the time of the eclipse.

See Chamber, page 5A

#### Mummy Berry

Mummy berry is a fairly common disease that affects blueberry plants. It can be a pretty devastating disease to your blueberry harvest. By the time that you see the affects of it, the opportunity to treat has passed. Let's talk about mummy berry, how it works, and what you can do to manage it.

Mummy berry is a fungal disease on blueberry bushes. It causes the blueberries to rot and fall off just as they are ripening to



be ready to harvest. This can be very frustrating to you as it looks like you're going to have a lot of blueberries and then one by one the they fall off the bush. Mummy berry is not too difficult to manage, but you have to follow a couple of steps to make sure that you get the best control of the

Mummy berry infects the blueberry bush when it is in bloom. Those blooms will turn into fruit over the course of the season. Blooms that were infected carry the mummy berry pathogen with them, which causes them to rot and fall off. When they rot and hit the ground, the pathogen stays there over winter. In the early spring it forms apothecia, or tiny mushrooms. These release spores that infect the leaves of the plant. The infected leaves produce spores that are transmitted to the flowers by bees or wind, and thus the mummy berry life cycle continues on

Because the infection of the fruit occurs at bloom it is most important to treat plants at that stage each year. Captan is a fungicide that is very effective at making sure that making sure that the blooms do not become infected. It's best to spray Captan every 7-10 days while plants are in bloom. There is an organic fungicide called Serenade that can be somewhat effective at controlling mummy berry if it is sprayed every 7 days. With Captan or Serenade it is important to get good coverage on the blooms of the plant. With any pesticide it is always important to read the label and follow it, as the label is the law.

A couple of other practices that can help to reduce the amount of mummy berry that you have are to remove dead berries after they fall. This will reduce the amount of pathogen that overwinters in the soil. To remove berries simply rake them out or use a leaf blower and then throw them into the trash or compost pile. Another practice is to mulch. Placing mulch 3-4 inches deep around the bush creates a physical barrier that is difficult for the mummy berry spores to move through. You don't want to place the mulch all the way up to the trunk of the bush. Pine straw, pine bark, or wood chips all work

See Williams, page 5A

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## North Georgia News

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The North Georgia News is an independent and nonpartisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articles covering local events, etc.

state requirements for the tag. Q. How is Union County Tax Commissioner handling delinquent and past due property taxes?

davit stating the vehicle meets

A. Property taxes that are past due accrue monthly interest on the 21st of each month. The interest rate is based on prime interest rate plus 3%. Also, a 5% penalty applies every 120 days until a maximum penalty equals 20%. If you owe back property

taxes, it is best to go into the Tax Commissioner's Office and work out a payment plan. Otherwise, an intent to FiFa -(File a Lien) letter is sent and the taxpayer has 30 days to come in and pay the back taxes or a lien will be placed on your property & a report filed on your credit rating. If the taxes are still not paid, the Tax Commissioner will place a levy on the property and the lien will be sold in a Tax Sale. In this case, the taxpayers lose the property. This is the last thing the Tax Commissioner's Office wants to happen. Our office does accept partial payments on property taxes. Please call 706 439-6017 or use our website at www.uniongatax.com.

#### **Tarter...** continued from Page 5A

grounds that day have been questioned and hundreds more detained in jail awaiting their hearings – for over three years

Visitors to D.C. who simply flew into the airports were investigated.

The Epoch Times has produced a documentary covering all of this.

No one has refuted the facts of the film. We just get totally irrelevant ad hominem

accusations about their relationship with the persecuted Chinese Falun Gong.

The Washington Post is owned by Jeff Bezos of Amazon and the Blue Origin space company and has a famously leftist slant. So what? When you are reading, look for facts, not opinions, folks.

Inform yourselves this year. Our country's future de-

pends on you.

J. Murray Tarter

#### Lausier... continued from Page 4A

ally a Marxist calling for the destruction of the United States so it can be rebuilt on a Marxist framework? Do you truly believe that the earth will end in 12 years if we don't have a Green New Deal with all electric cars, no gas stoves, no fossil fuels, and paying higher taxes?

Do you still believe in right and wrong? Do you really believe the lawfare happening to President Trump is right? Law for Republicans but none for Democrats, because that is what this DOJ is enforcing. Prosecuting Trump and not Biden. Are you OK with that?

Can you honestly say you are better off now than four years ago? I am not.

Did you enjoy the tyrannical mandate that Biden forced on this country to get the untested vaccine or lose your job? Was that right? How many, many lives were lost at such a young age due to the vaccine side effects? Do you truly believe that lying and cheating are the best way to get your political ideology enforced? Because the national party believes that.

Are you proud of the invasion into our country from both the southern and northern borders, that the national party encouraged? To what end? The national party has thrown open the borders and let everyone in from all over the world, including terrorists. Any city, any power grid and/or water supply is open to full terrorist attack, and the Democrat Party is let-

ting this happen. Are you proud

Are you proud that children who are not capable of making a decision in life are having their bodies chemically and surgically altered to supposedly become the opposite sex? Are you as Democrats proud of taking away women's sports and allowing men to cheat and be in women's sports? I think I am tall, thin with blonde hair and blue eyes, but reality is, I am not. Just saying you are the opposite sex does not make it so. Are you proud of enabling the transgender movement when these people really need mental health and compassion for their

Are you proud of the Democrat Party? If you are then you believe in all of the above and more. If you do not believe in all of it, then why are you still a Democrat? The Republicans are not perfect, but they do not support these issues. If you do not fully support the radical national Democrat Party, then think for yourself; what is happening in this country is wrong, and hopefully deep down in your heart you agree. Hopefully. Hopefully you will become part of the change.

#### Chamber... continued from Page 5A

As thrilling as the eclipse anticipation is, remember that optimal viewing conditions depend on the weather. Clear skies are essential for experiencing the full wonder of this event. Keep an eye on the weather forecast and plan accordingly to make the most of this extraordinary celestial occurrence in Blairsville.

To view the eclipse from one of the best views in Blairsville – join Living Water Winery for their Eclipse Viewing Party beginning at 2 p.m. They will have a limited supply of glasses so please bring your

own if possible.

This eclipse is just another reason why things are always better in Blairsville!

#### Ashurst... continued from Page 5A

ily members. It is healthy to own up to one's personal loneliness. Living in denial is a nowin situation because it will catch up to you sooner or later.

It's healthy to spend time alone. One needs to know how to be alone. -Oscar

#### Yohe... continued from Page 4A

to eradicate its spiritual exer-

cises to maintain its own policy

of state atheism. Falun Gong is

known for "opposing the Chi-

nese Communist Party (CCP),

espousing anti-evolutionary

views, opposition to homo-

sexuality and feminism, and

rejection of modern medicine,

among other views described

pears the too common ploy is

to smear, intimidate, persecute

and even prosecute the person in an attempt to destroy the

truth and value of the facts

presented. The movie exposes

the probability members of

our elected government and

the mainstream media have

Joshua's Warriors is not "lying down with" the owner

of Epoch Times, rather we

are standing for exposing

threats to America's heritage

and Christian values. Under

the Constitution and Bill of

Rights, as a Republic, it's

our individual and assembled

rights, plus responsibility, to

reveal threats to our nation,

both foreign and domestic.

Jim Yohe, Secretary

Joshua's Warriors

By showing the movie,

purposely lied to us.

Today in America, it ap-

as 'ultra-conservative."

in life and become a better per-

Grant you this is not salvation by Jesus, our Messiah, but it does not exclude truthful reporting unlike what we face today. The movie was based on the organization's own filming at the time unlike the edited and enhanced video from the government and mainstream media, especially the J6 com-

Unfortunately, decades ago collegiate journalism was taught as a "social change agent," exchanging reporting for indoctrination. Because someone does not believe modern medicine is our salvation or that science is our god, does not refute the images recorded and the actions by our government on January 6 and the political persecution the current DOJ continues to en-

By the way, Falun Gong was banned in China because the Communist Party wanted

#### Clyde... continued from Page 5A

implement the Biden Administration's disastrous EV mandate. This commonsense provision was included in the House-passed FY24 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. Additionally, I joined Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI) in introducing H.R. 4468, the Choice in Automobile Retail Sales (CARS) Act, to prohibit the EPA from finalizing, implementing, or enforcing its proposed EV mandate. If you recall, our legislation passed the House with bipar-

tisan support in December. Since President Biden is defiantly moving forward with his radical EV mandate, Congress must advance additional measures to stop this illegitimate power grab from being forced on American consumers and auto manufacturers. Please know that I will continue fighting against the Biden Administration's EV rule from burdening you and your family. Stay tuned!

#### Fowler... continued from Page 4A

Lewis' 'Mere Christianity,' I wrote in my notebook 'the evidence surrounding the claims of Christianity is simply overwhelming.' I realized that my achievements were ultimately unsatisfying... so I became a believer in Christ." His doubts, his unbeliefs, yielded

to the evidence. A father approached Jesus on behalf of his ailing son.

He pleaded, "If you can do anything..." Jesus responded, "If you can?" Realizing his faux pas the man cried, "Help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24). And there you find the doubters prayer. The Truth is not far from you.

#### Dyer... continued from Page 5A

So, when you receive a letter from your volunteer fire station, we ask that you read it to stay informed. We also ask you to come to the open house of the fire stations. But most important, we ask that you please make a donation to your local volunteer fire station. Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your

#### Fallen Union County Deputy Derrick Whittle to be honored at Semiannual Blood Drive April 6th

BLOOD DRIVE

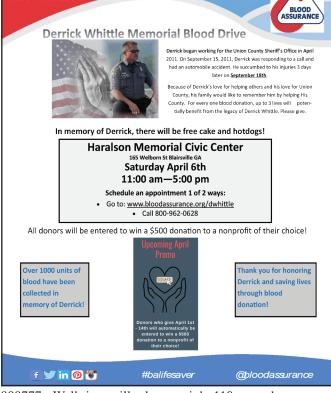
Blood Assurance and the family of a fallen Union County sheriff's deputy will honor his life during an upcoming blood drive.

The semiannual Derrick Whittle Memorial Blood Drive is scheduled for Saturday, April 6, from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Haralson Memorial Civic Center in Blairsville.

On September 15, 2011, Whittle, 38, was critically injured in a car crash while responding to an emergency call. He died three days later at Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga.

Since the first blood drive in 2012, Blood Assurance has collected more than 1,000 units of blood in Whittle's memory, which is enough to save more than 3,000 lives. Due to the overwhelming response from the community, the event now takes place twice a year: once in April to honor Whittle's birthday, and again in September, in memory of his passing.

Donors can schedule an appointment online at www. bloodassurance.org/dwhittle. 0628, or text BAGIVE to old with parental consent), in iron prior to donating.



999777. Walk-ins will also weigh 110 pounds or more be accepted.

nate blood, you must be at of fluids — avoiding caffeine You can also call 800-962- least 17 years old (16 years — and eat a meal that is rich

and be in good health. Do-To be eligible to do- nors are asked to drink plenty

#### Cummings... continued from Page 4A

bing process and he was never stung during the process.

Later in life after he had slowed down Clifford became good friends with Doc Underwood. Doc was the resident Doctor in the little town of Phil Campbell, Alabama. Each Tuesday morning for the next 35 years Doc would visit his old friend Clifford Hyde for a game of Dominoes. The old men would sit on the front porch during the spring, summer and fall. During the winter the pair would sit by Clifford's old pot-bellied stove. Most of the time Clifford would win the game, and that was good because Clif-

ford could not stand to lose. But, when Doc won the game. Clifford would pout and say, "You must have cheated. Everyone knows you can't beat me at Dominoes. Get out of my house and don't come back." Then the old man would snatch the dominoes off the table and throw them By all accounts you

would think the relationship between Doc and Clifford was over. However, early on the next Tuesday morning you could find Clifford walking the quarter mile to the Nix Mercantile to buy a new set of dominoes.

#### WilliamS... continued from Page 5A Enotah Garden Club are host-

well for mulch. The best control of mummy berry is to use a combination of spraying, removing, and mulching.

Mummy berry is simple to control if you get the timing right. If you have questions about mummy berry contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

On April 10th from 1-3 PM the Towns-Union Master Gardeners Association and the ley Frasca. The cost is \$15. You can register for this event by going to https://t.uga.edu/9JK. I am also hosting a Master Naturalist training. This is an

ing an afternoon tea with Ash-

8-week course that focuses on the natural resources around us.

If you are interested in participating in that email me or call the Union County Extension Office at 706-439-