# Opinions

# Everybody has one...

All Things

New

Wayne

# **UC Maintains ISO Rating of 4/4Y**

In January, Insurance Services Office's (ISO) conducted a survey of Union County to determine the Public Protection Class  $(PPC^{TM})$ , commonly referred to as the ISO rating. The PPC<sup>TM</sup> is one tool that insurers use for underwriting and to calculate fire insurance premiums for homes and businesses. ISO conducts this survey to evaluate the major elements of a community's fire protection.

They then assign a numerical grade called  $PPC^{TM}$  or "ISO rating". The Fire Dept. from Union PPC<sup>™</sup> ranges from class 10 (worst) to class 1 (best). County Fire Chief Union County Fire Department, David

E911 Dispatch and the various water companies of the City and County are proud to announce that Union County's

PPC™ class has remained a 4/4Y. The survey results shall take effect in August of this year. The survey did point out improvements such as having a ladder apparatus, increased training hours, public education, and more firefighters responding to fires.

The major elements of the survey include the E911 dispatch center (10% of the grade); the water departments, (40% of the grade); and the fire department, (50% of the grade). The E911 dispatch center is evaluated for the dispatch equipment, the operations, and training. The water departments are evaluated on the number of hydrants, water pipes, supply, and usage. The fire department is evaluated on apparatus, equipment, training, station placement, response, and personnel on scene of structure fires.

The PPCTM affects insurance rates on your home and business. Although there are many factors that make up the insurance rates, the maintaining of the ISO PPC at a 4/4Y should mean insurance rates for home and business owners should remain the same. However, it is up to the individual insurance companies to deter-

The difference between a 4 rating and a 4Y rating depends on the fire hydrants. If a building or home is located within five road miles of a fire station and has a hydrant within 1000 feet, it is a class 4. If a building or home is located within five road miles of a fire station and there is NO hydrant within 1000 feet, it is a class 4Y (formally class 8B). All homes or buildings beyond five road miles of a fire station are classified as class 10.

ISO expects to survey Union County's fire suppression ef-

See Dyer, page 5A

### **Enjoy His Presence**

"He who has God and everything else has no more than he who has God only." –  $C.\ S.\ Lewis$ 

How many friends or followers do you have on social media? Human nature compels you toward relationships. You want people to like your posts, know your name, and look at you when you enter the room. While it hurts to be ignored or considered irrelevant, you are gratified to be

welcomed as part of the inner circle. That yearning, never satisfied by human relationships (or social media), points to something far more glori-

In "The Weight of Glory" Lewis writes, "But we pine. The

sense that in this universe we are treated as strangers, the longing to be acknowledged, to meet with some response, to bridge some chasm that yawns between us and reality, is part of our inconsolable secret. The promise of glory becomes highly relevant to our deep desire. For glory means good report with God, acceptance by God, and welcome into the heart of things." Nothing less than the presence of God is what we truly desire.

God created humans that way, and throughout history He met that need. He appeared to Adam and Eve, Abraham, and Moses. He was in the garden, the fiery furnace, and the temple. As the people returned to Jerusalem after their exile to Babylon, the Lord declared, "Behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst. Many nations will join themselves to the Lord in that day and will become My people" (Zech. 2:10-11). By this the Lord opened up the invitation to enjoy His presence.

He ultimately fulfilled the promise of His presence by stepping into His creation as Emmanuel, "God with us." He "became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory." His presence was not just for that moment. As Jesus told His disciples, "I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am there you may be also." He promised that the Father would send the Helper, the Spirit of truth, saying, "You know Him because He abides with you and will be in you." (Matt. 1:23, John 1:14, 14:3,17). God is present for you.

The writings of Brother Lawrence popularized "the practice of the presence of God." Awareness of God in each moment

See Fowler, page 5A

### **Commissioner's Questions**

Residents have recently asked questions about the Union County Fire Department and about the Fire Department's funding. This week's questions talk about the various ways that our full-time and volunteer fire stations are funded. Our Fire Department operates efficiently, and we're so proud of the great work that they do. Q. I understand that Union County has full time fire

fighters and volunteer firefighters. What is the difference between the from Union County A. Union County Fire Depart-Commissioner ment is a combination department

Paris

meaning that we have both career and volunteer firefighters. The career fire-

fighters are full time employees who work a 24-hour shift every third day. We have three shifts who operate out of the headquarters station, Station 1. We also have a full-time firefighter in Suches who works from 8 am to 4 pm each weekday. He is assigned to Station 5.

O. Where are our fire stations located?

A. The volunteers are assigned to four main fire districts: 2 (Jones Creek), 3 (Owltown), 4 (Ivy Log), and 5 (Suches). They are responsible for the operation of the 11 volunteer stations that are within these districts. The volunteers are as the name implies volunteers-they only receive reimbursement for the calls that they respond to. For specific fire house addresses, please consult the union county website at www.unioncountyga.gov/fire-depart-Q. Does the Union County Government fund the Union

**County Fire Department?** 

A. The Fire Department has a budget that funds the salaries of the career firefighters, reimbursements of the volunteers, and general operations for all 12 stations. These general operations include building, vehicle, and equipment maintenance, power, water, telephone, fuel, insurance, etc. There is a limited amount of money for equipment purchases.

Q. I have recently received mail asking for donations for volunteer fire departments. What is this about?

A. The volunteers also raise donations that are controlled and operated by the volunteer members assigned to that district. These funds are used to purchase additional equipment for the

See Paris, page 5A

# **Ultimate Commitment**

I was in Jacksonville, Florida, this past weekend for my grandson's wedding, and their vows were poignant and sincere. However, I am most struck by the words of the officiant, proclaiming that their vows were "forever" vows, and that all of their actions together should be di-

rected at aiming for the long haul in the relationship. of my grandparents celebrated wedding anniversaries, and although my husband is quite



a bit my senior, we recently celebrated our silver. It was important to me.

And that got me thinking about other commitments that we make in life, much like the oath taken by every service member when entering

their respective branch. I, Janice Marie Walters, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the Unit-See Walters-Taylor, page 5A

### Letters to the Editor

### Loss of a Good Man

I would like to take this opportunity to not only acknowledge a great humanitarian who has recently passed, but to also give credence to his passion for publishing TRUTH, Mr. Charles Duncan. His search for truth allowed many (myself included) to share their thoughts amongst the community via newspaper articles that he, right or wrong, dually, without prejudice, saw fit to be published. For that alone I cannot thank him enough. There is no praise worthy of his diligence. We lost a good man who kept other people in his heart first and foremost. 'Tis such a shame that trait seems so lacking in the masses of today's insanity.

See **DeGolyer**, page 5A

### Walking the Razor's Edge

### Dear Editor,

Georgia's Reverend Senator - or is it Senator Reverend? - Raphael Warnock has published an infomercial praising, extolling, supporting, lying about, Senate Bill 1. If you've done your research on this bill

you will know that the Reverend Senator - or is it Senator Reverend? - is in favor of destroying America's voting protocols in favor of giving Democrats absolute control over every federal election. Our senators have no knowledge of, in-

terest in and accord no obeisance to the Constitution. Their Oaths of Office were, as Obama said of the Constitution, "just words." They are Demofascists — first and foremost. We, the People, are walking the Razor's Edge.

Georgia's Reverend Senator - or is it Senator Reverend? - Raphael Warnock will try for a full six-year term next year.

George Mitchell

### **Our Responsibility**

### Dear Editor,

As followers of Jesus Christ, because we have accepted Him into our hearts as our Lord and Savior and are saved from the wrath of God, we now have the command from God to go tell what Christ has done for us, by giving us eternal life when this earthly life is over. If one is truly born again, by the word and by the Spirit of the living God, then our task is to get God's truth, His word, out to as many ears that will hear and hearts that will receive God's loving grace.

Folks, it's time to get out of our comfort zones and let our light shine for Christ and spread a little salt of kindness to those who need a Savior.

See Combs, page 5A

## Wildfires & Insurance

Here is something we do not think about until we need it and many people find out too late that their insurance coverage is inadequate

Every year, the wildfire season seems to start earlier and burn later. In fact, the Na-

interagency Fire Center reports 2015 as having experienced the most dismal wildfire season on record in the United States with more than



68,000 wildfires burning a whopping 10.1 million acres. In the past 3 decades, the length of wildfire season has increased worldwide by nearly 20%, according to the scientific journal Nature Communications.

While Georgia in not in the top 10 for acres burned by wildfires, homeowners are still at risk for the many small fires that occur each year and if your home is the middle of one it is Damage from wildfires and forest fires could be covered by your homeowner's insur-

ance. While your dwelling coverage can help with expenses related to repairing or rebuilding your home (up to the limits you choose for your policy), personal property coverage can help replace any of your belongings that are destroyed. Plus, other structures protection can be a financial safeguard for things like a shed or gazebo. Homeowners insurance could also provide coverage for additional living expenses (like food, a hotel, and transportation) if you are

house gets vandalized while you're away, your policy may offer you protection in that circum-What is more, home insurance will typically help cover expenses related to smoke and soot damage, if the damage resulted from a cov-

forced to evacuate due to a wildfire. And if your

ered event, like a wildfire. Homeowners who live close to areas prone to wildfires and brush fires may pay more for coverage because of the financial risk posed to the insurer. And some homeowners will flatout be denied coverage under a standard home policy — often those who live within 2,500 feet of canyons, wildfire areas, or brush areas. These homeowners can often purchase a standalone fire policy to secure protection against wildfires. Most insurers will pay up to a certain percentage of your dwelling coverage limit on your homeowners' policy if your trees, shrubs, or other lawn plants are damaged during a wildfire.

For example, many insurance companies will pay up to 5% of your dwelling coverage limit to help remove debris and replace any de-

See Riley, page 5A

### Minnie, Petunia and Bessie

1958 was an important year because it was the year that phone lines came to the Trapptown Community. I was much too young to remember the phone lines coming to our community, but these lines changed life forever.

Phones allowed people to stay in better

touch with each other. Minnie, Petunia and Bessie were a mother and two sisters that lived with Mickey each other. Minnie was a widow while



Petunia nor Bessie had ever married. The ladies were my Papa's aunt and cousins. They lived an isolated life out toward the Bee Bluff above Turkey Creek. Life became particularly hard for the women after the death of Minnie's husband. John owned a nice little farm that was really too much for the ladies to work. Also, the three women had a hard time keeping up with the latest community gossip until the phone lines were installed. So, my grandfather's brother, Pickens, would go to see the ladies to visit with them, give them the latest news and take them some food to eat.

One particular month in early spring had been very difficult for the three of them. All they had eaten was cornbread for the whole month of March. As usual, Pickens showed up at their front door with fresh baked cathead biscuits, sorghum syrup, sweet potatoes, canned beets, leather breeches and a country cured ham. Petunia told Pickens he had saved their lives with all this food. Pickens left their house feeling pretty good about what he'd done.

The ladies sat down to the best meal they'd had in a month and began to eat. In fact, they ate everything Pickens had brought them. They ate so much they got sick and thought Pickens had poisoned the food. Afterward, Petunia and Bessie got on the phone lines and told anyone who'd listen that Pickens had tried to poison them. By the next day, Pickens' good deed had turned him into a monster about which the whole community was talking. For years afterward the sisters would fetch a gun if they saw Pickens approach-

A couple of years later Uncle Bud became engaged and was soon to marry. He went for a visit to the three ladies. Petunia met him at the door and said, "Heared tell that you were to marry." Uncle Bud told her yes and told her who he was marrying. Petunia said, "You follow me." Even though she'd never been married, Petunia took him to the back of the house and proceeded to tell Uncle Bud about the birds and the bees. Thanks to those new phone lines, by the next day, the whole community had found out that Uncle Bud now knew about the birds and the

See Cummings, page 5A

# Chamber of Commerce

It's that time of year! CONGRATS to all our graduates. What an exciting time as each begins a new stage in your life whether its continuing your education or going directly into the workforce. Always remember your roots and remember you have a community behind you that

is not only cheering for you but is here to give you a hand when needed. Take time to give your parents and teacher a big hug and a

Blairsville - Union County Steve Rowe

thank you for helping to get you where you are

today and for helping to prepare you for your Don't miss out on Business After Hours

at Kennedy Creek Resort and our Buy Local Extravaganza. Both have limited space available. so if you have not signed up, please contact the Chamber soon. Kennedy Creek will treat us to a fabulous evening at their new facility in Suches. This beautiful venue will give a sampling of their fabulous menu as you will be treated to a relaxing evening in an unbelievable setting, so sign

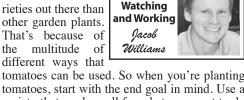
See Chamber, page 5A

### Tomato Growing

Tomatoes are one of the most common vegetables in home gardens. They are great on a sandwich or eaten like an apple. You can can them and use them in all different recipes. My favorite is a fried green tomato. Tomato growing is rewarding and delicious.

Tomatoes are unique in that there are more tomato varieties out there than other garden plants. That's because of the multitude of different ways that





tomatoes, start with the end goal in mind. Use a variety that works well for what you want to do with it. Also, take a look at the disease resistance that tomato has in it. This can vary a lot by variety. Disease resistance will give you a serious leg up and give you a lot fewer headaches as the season goes on.

You'll want to plant in an area that gets 6-8 hours of sunlight and has a soil pH of 6.2-6.8. Tomatoes can grow roots all along their stem. So when planting transplants plant them down to the first set of leaves. Plant them 2 feet apart in row, and set rows 4-6 feet apart. Firm up the soil around the transplants to push out any air pockets. After transplanting put 2 tablespoons of 5-10-10 fertilizer around each plant.

Most plants will need to be staked. You can buy cages to stake the plants. Alternatively, you can use wooden stakes that are 5-6 feet long. Drive a stake into the ground between every other plant about 1 foot deep. You can take twine or strips of cloth and weave these around the stakes to support the plants. As the plants grow higher, you can add more levels of twine.

Apply 1.5 pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet prior to planting. Once tomatoes start forming on the vine and are the size of a quarter apply 1 pound of 10-10-10 per 100 square feet. Repeat that application every 3-4

weeks until harvest is finished. Tomatoes need about 1-2 inches of water per week. If we don't get enough rain, you can supply the rest. When watering plants it's better to give 1 or 2 heavy soakings, than multiple light

There are many insects that can cause problems for tomatoes. Insecticidal soap does a pretty good job for most soft-bodied insects. Bt works well for caterpillars and insects that feed on the plants. Scout your garden regularly so that you quickly find new pests. Pests are much easier to control in small numbers and when they aren't full-grown.

Blossom end rot is caused by a calcium deficiency. Maintaining a good pH, keeping

See Williams, page 5A

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# Paris... continued from Page 4A

volunteer members. This equipment includes firefighting gear, wildland gear, search and rescue equipment, and medical responder equipment. The funds are also used to purchase communications equipment, and firefighting equipment as well as fire apparatus.

Q. Does the Union County Fire Department receive grants?

A. The Fire Department as a whole does actively seek and receive grants from both state and local organizations. We apply for the Georgia Forestry Commission grant each year. This grant is a 50/50 match grant for wildland firefighting and other firefighting equipment.

We have also received several federal grants to purchase Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)s and Turnout Gear washer/dryers. Both the career and volunteer firefighters benefit from these

# Cummings... continued from Page 4A

bees thanks to the talk with his cousin Petunia.

Uncle Bud and Daddy decided to have some fun. They knew that the sisters could not stay off the phone. They were addicted to the telephone. So, the young men called up the sisters and said, "Petunia Dubois, this is John Underwood at Standard Telephone. We are here at Trapptown working on the phone lines Duringthe next three

hours, if you hear the phone ringing, please do not answer. If you do, it will electrocute me." Petunia agreed and the boys hung up the phone. After 30 minutes, Dad dialed Petunia's number and let it ring 30 times. Finally, Petunia answered the call. Upon her answer, my dad gave a long, drawn-out quivering scream into the phone. Petunia thought she had killed John Underwood.

### Combs... continued from Page 4A

We cannot hide our faith in God in our closet or in a bush or under a rock; it must be put out into our communities; in our own families who are lost; friends that we love also may need Jesus. What does it take to step out in faith, believing that the Lord, God, will provide the word we need when we speak on His behalf? When you write a letter to someone, don't forget to mention Jesus' loving Grace. We must be bold in our witness to others, not ashamed to share what Christ has done for you and what God will do for others who come as they are and

prayerfully fall in love with the Almighty God, our Creator and Savior of our souls.

God has done all He can to make sure you get to heaven, not hell, when you leave this earthly sod, but you must make the ultimate choice to accept Jesus Christ who died on the cross for all of mankind's sins. Don't be wise in your own thoughts and ignore what God wants you to share with Him in glory. Make the right decision, not only for you, but all around you that may need a Savior, Jesus Christ as well.

Frank F. Combs

# DeGolyer... continued from Page 4A

I quote Metallica's original and former bassist, a Mr. Cliff Burton, from his last instrumental ever released publicly (and the only words in any of his instrumentals), "When a man lies, he murders some part of the world. These are the pale deaths that men miscall their

lives. All this I cannot bear to witness any longer. Cannot the Kingdom of Salvation take me home?" I hide behind no walls or falseness.

The Preacher **Ezekhiel Druid King** Nick DeGolyer

# **Riley...** continued from Page 4A

stroyed plants. Generally, your insurer will not pay more than \$500 per any one plant, including the cost to remove it. However, coverage does vary from company to company, so it is important to read the terms and conditions of your specific

Of course, the best way to avoid having to file a wildfire insurance claim is by reducing your home's risk of damage. The Firewise Communities program recommends taking these steps when it comes to home maintenance and landscaping: Use nonflammable construction materials, like roofing and materials for exterior walls; Apply fire-retardant finishes to exterior wood; Keep gutters and roofs clean of debris; Remove tree limbs from attachments and overhangs; Make sure your home's windows are double-paned, or use tempered glass; Use fire-resistant plants and gardening materials; Keep trees clear of limbs and branches until it reaches the 10-foot mark; Clear your yard of dead vegetation and other debris; Maintain the space between

It is important to note what not to do too — as in, do not store firewood close to your place between April and September, and do not store

your yard's trees; Make sure

to mow, prune, and water your

yard on a regular basis.

propane tanks against your home or underneath porches or decks. It is also a wise idea to have a written evacuation plan that you and your family review on a regular basis. You can decide on safe family gathering points, alternative routes should the unexpected occur, and keep a list of important documents and emergency phone numbers. And be sure to maintain a thorough home inventory of your more valuable belongings in case they're damaged or destroyed in a blaze it can really expedite the claims process and help you get back on your feet faster.

We should mention that you should not dispose of any damaged or destroyed belongings until the claims process is complete.

One of the most important things to do first is to understand your homeowner's policy to make sure you have adequate coverage for wildfires and other natural disasters before you have a problem. The key words here are, "might", "if", "May" and "could" which be the exits for insurance companies to deny insurance payments so find out before it is too late.

To check your coverage, call your insurance agent. For more information check www. firewise.org or www.chestchat-

### **American Legion Auxiliary** Unit 121 elects new leadership



There is a new slate of officers heading up the local unit of the American Legion auxiliary. Following are the new faces that will head up the organization: President: Melanie Reed; 1st VP & Treasurer: Doris Burdo; Secretary: Patti Cousins; Historian: Joanne O'Malley; and Chaplain: Patti Cousins.

Immediate Past President, Janice Walters, wishes the new leadership well in the endeavours. Janice, who finished a year and a half as president leaves a legacy of new programs, such as White and Gold Star Memorial programs, institution of the annua Poppy coloring Contest for school aged children, and Veteran's Connection, a luncheon program open to all branches of veterans. She leaves, but is not gone as she assumed a leadership role in a new VSO in Blairsville VALOR Clinic, who will host a week long program in Blairsville called

Veteran's unstoppable, de-

signed for veterans who strug-

gle with post-service life.

Melanie, a local massage therapist by trade, assumes the role with a vision of social interaction with the Legion; she suspends the Tasty Tuesday luncheons in favor of a monthly pre-meeting dinner on the third Tuesday of every month, immediately before the monthly meeting at 6:30.

Melanie has also spearheaded a number of fund raising activities for the immediate future.

Both the American Legion and Auxiliary meet on the third Tuesday of each month, at 6:30 PM, at the Leon Davenport Center at 78 Old Blue Ridge Highway. Come grab a bite and join.

#### **Historical Society's** Brick Walk

To show our appreciation for the overwhelming community support for the Union County Historical Society's Brick Walk, we are extending the current price of

Please call the Historical Society at 706-745-5493 or come by the old courthouse to purchase one in memory or in honor of a loved one.

# Walters-Taylor... continued from Page 4A

ed States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God. Many, if asked, will tell you that that enlistment oath is akin to a blank check for up to and including their life. Now that's one heckuva lifetime commitment.

And probably about half of us are not 100% on board

### Williams... continued from Page 4A

plants well watered, and having enough calcium in the soil will prevent blossom end rot. Foliar sprays to give calcium are only short-term fixes. Healthy soil and good water practices will eliminate this problem. Tomatoes are best if they

fully ripen on the vine. However, if you pick them before they are fully ripe you can set them out in a room that's around 70 degrees. I like to use the kitch-If you have questions

about growing tomatoes contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

### Fowler...

#### continued from Page 4A

brings you peace, empathy, and contentment. It is an ongoing reminder that your identity and destiny are in Christ. Your awareness of the reality of God becomes apparent to the people around you as you live for the divine accolade, "Well done good and faithful servant.'

As you travel through this life and gain relationships, remember the One who made your journey possible and prepared your ultimate destination. To have God is to have enough. Enjoy His presence.

# Dyer...

### continued from Page 4A

forts every 3-4 years or sooner if there have been any major changes to the dispatch center, fire department or water systems. Union County Fire Department and the various other departments involved in the survey work continuously to maintain and/or improve Union County's ISO PPC<sup>TM</sup> class.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

### Chamber... continued from Page 4A

up today. Buy Local, as always, delivers a great way to promote your business and this year the event will host more businesses than before. Buy Local will be located in the new Sports Complex which will allow for more sell out, so don't miss this op-

portunity to reserve a table. The July 4th Fireworks at Meeks Park will be bigger and better! We have contracted with the pyrotechnics company to give us an even bigger bang for our buck this year! As in previous years we will have reserved parking so you can arrive on your own schedule and have your space waiting for you. But you will want to arrive early to enjoy the music, food trucks and games. This year will be a blast for all ages, we will have something for everyone! Call the Chamber today as these spaces will go quick.

Life is always better in Blairsville!

# **Weekly Patriot** Reflection



**Peace through Strength** 

What did our Founding fathers believe about how we were to maintain our freedom? Well, certainly they believed in sound government, economic stability, religion, education, natural law and family structure. But they also believed in peace for all through strength.

Benjamin Franklin stated, "The very fame of our strength and readiness would be a means of discouraging our enemies. The way to secure peace is to be prepared for war." He had strong words for those who would wave the flag of liberty but do little to provide for defending it.

We live in difficult times, with threats from several sides. To continue to enjoy freedom and liberty we must be diligent to stay prepared. There is an old Italian quote that goes something like this: Make yourselves sheep, and the wolves will eat you!

A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www. joshuaswarriors.org.

with currently elected leadership in Washington, D.C., however, we have pledged al-

legiance and must live up to

that oath. This is not something

veterans take lightly; their service oath is their bond. You can count on that. I hope to see you at this year's Memorial Day ceremony on the 29th at Veteran's Park at

10 a.m. There, you will be able to see evidence of the ultimate commitment to service. Until we muse again, I

bid you "At Ease!"