

Opinions

Everybody has one...

School Walkthroughs

It is that time of the year again, back to school and everyone is getting prepared. Last week Union County Fire Department and dispatchers from Union County E911 conducted the annual Union County School walkthroughs. These walkthroughs involved all of the buildings and the school campus. The purpose of the walkthroughs is to familiarize responders and dispatchers with the school buildings and the emergency systems of each. Being familiar with these systems and procedures will help responders if there was an emergency.

The participants were escorted through each school building by Union County School Police. The first matter to review was where to enter each school campus to avoid students evacuating the building during a fire alarm. We discussed where to place apparatus and which areas were best for firefighters to enter the buildings. Inside the buildings, participants were shown the locations for the electricity shut off, the domestic water shut off, gas shut off, the sprinkler systems, and the alarm systems.

The most important was the alarm panels and fire sprinkler systems. Each alarm panel was located in the building and the procedure for operating each panel was reviewed. These panels can tell firefighters where the fire is most likely located and the extent.

Firefighters also reviewed the many fire sprinkler systems and how to operate each system. Firefighters must know how to determine if a sprinkler head has been activated and how to support that sprinkler with the fire engine. We must also know how to cut the water off to that sprinkler head after the fire is out to minimize water damage. It is not like the movies, only the sprinkler heads that have been activated will spray water; not all of them.

There are several other advantages to performing the walkthroughs at the schools. Dispatchers and firefighters are able to meet school staff, thus building relationships which will be helpful in the event of an emergency. The participants also become aware of the campus and the multiple buildings. This can be helpful knowing where to respond during an emergency at the schools.

Union County Fire Department and Union County E911 would like to thank the Union County School Board members, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendents, faculty, staff, Chief

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



But to Minister

Twin girls born in rural South Georgia during the Depression years didn't have many advantages. But someone took the words of Jesus seriously - and impacted generations.

The physician attending their home birth did not believe the tiny babies would survive. But they did, and at age 15 placed first in their high school graduating class. A librarian who was impressed with their potential and knew their circumstances suggested they apply to Berry College.

Martha Berry's life spanned the years from the Civil War to World War II. Moved by the plight of children of poor landowners and tenant farmers, she began a Sunday school class on the family property near Rome, GA. That led to her opening first a boarding school for high school education, then Berry College. She offered the opportunity for students to work and earn their tuition, room and board while receiving an education. She was not offering a handout but rather the dignity of serving others. They farmed, cleaned and cooked for fellow students and staff.

Berry adopted the motto, "Not to be ministered unto but to minister." This expression is taken from an exchange between Jesus and the sons of Zebedee. They wanted Him to make them privileged leaders. "You do not know what you're asking," He replied. "Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant." That idea is at the core of the Christian gospel. "For even the Son of man (Jesus) came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:35-45, KJV). Berry understood that following Jesus means sacrifice and service to others.

In 1950, the teenaged twins took the Nancy Hanks train to Atlanta where they boarded a bus to Rome. Despite intense homesickness, they endured and earned college degrees. One of those girls is my mother. At Berry College, she met my father. With college degrees in hand, the newlyweds began their careers and later their family. Berry's impact to their children and successive generations was not just to elevate their economic class. It was the legacy of service to others, as taught and modeled by our Savior.

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

(Part 1) - There appears to be some confusion concerning the various types of courts recognized by the State of Georgia. This week's questions reflect some of the questions we receive about these courts.

Q1. Why do we have so many different types of courts in Georgia?

A1. Georgia courts have authority over specific types of cases as set forth in the Constitution of the State of Georgia. The court system includes judges, court administrators, court clerks, prosecutors, jury managers, and court reporters as well as others who are essential to keeping our trial and appellate courts working smoothly.

Q2. What is the difference between Superior Court, State Court, Magistrate Court, and Probate Court?

A2. Basically, superior Court is responsible for handling cases involving serious crimes (felonies), such as civil disputes, real estate matters and family and domestic relations issues. State Court handles civil law actions not otherwise within the jurisdiction of Superior Court, such as dispossessions, misdemeanors, and certain traffic offenses. Magistrate Court (Civil Division) hears cases involving civil claims of \$15,000 or less. Probate Court has exclusive jurisdiction in probate of wills, administration of estates, appointment of guardians, involuntary hospitalizations, issuance of gun licenses and marriage licenses.

Q3. Which court is the highest court in Georgia?

A3. The Georgia Supreme Court is considered a Court of Review and has 9 justices. It reviews decisions made by other courts in civil and criminal cases. This court alone rules on questions involving the constitutionality of state statutes, all criminal cases involving a sentence of death, and petitions from decisions of the Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court is assigned oversight of the legal profession and the judiciary, as well as other designated duties. The Chief Justice presides at official sessions of the Supreme Court and conferences of the justices.

Q4. What is the Court of Appeals and how does it fit in with the Supreme Court?

A4. The Court of Appeals has jurisdiction over trial courts

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Habitat for Humanity

In July of 2020, I was ReStore Manager of Habitat for Humanity Towns-Union Counties. One day I noticed a man, visibly upset, in a conversation with one of my part-time staffers. I approached him and asked if there was anything I could do to help. The man stated that his landlords had given him a 30-day notice to vacate the property due to the landlords selling the property. Although he applied for many of the affordable

housing apartments in the area, he was unable to acquire one within 30 days. For those of you unaware, most of our affordable housing apartments have several year wait lists. Due to one of this young children having a service dog because of a disability, he was unable to find a private home for rent. The man was visibly upset, and although we are Habitat for Humanity, there was no way to put a house up in that time frame, or even go through the Family Selection process to begin a home build. I cannot imagine the fear and

See Habitat, page 5A

Habitat Happenings
Executive Director
Charlotte Randall



Letters to the Editor

Re: "If It's Not Broken, Don't Fix It"

Dear Editor,

I wonder how many of the malcontents have actually had dealings with a multi-member commission? I dealt with a five-member commission several times a year for 15 years. I finally had to hire a lawyer and an engineer to represent me. Like Mr. Bronn, I'll take a single commissioner where the buck stops with him/her, who can't say, "It's not my district," or a half dozen other excuses on why they can't get something done. Do you really want to go from an elected official running the county to an unelected person? With three to five part-time commissioners, you end up with an unelected county manager that pretty much runs the county.

While Lamar's decisions have not always been perfect, they have been in the high 90%, and things get done in a timely and cost-effective manner.

If you are unhappy with a sole commissioner, go sit in on a few Fannin County multi-member meetings and see how long it takes to maybe get something accomplished, or better yet, move there.

Dick Bell

Re: "Second Amendment"

Dear Editor,

The Second Amendment is the amendment to the Constitution that guarantees all the other rights. Our Founding Fathers knew all too well what it was like to have a standing army bunking in their homes. They wanted what has now become the Swiss Solution where every household had a citizen with a gun and the knowledge to use it. Switzerland hasn't been invaded in a minute.

The Founding Fathers were highly educated and even the punctuation of the amendment intentionally supports the distinction between the militia and the armed citizen. Further, written records by James Madison show the actual intent of the amendment was for the citizen to be armed. Note: when jurists examine a law, they frequently explore the arguments that were made prior to enacting the law. So, we are not limited by the wording of the law to fathom its intent.

I myself confronted a group of thugs that surrounded my wife and me in Northern Virginia. Simply brandishing my weapon stopped the entire episode. No one was injured.

It's naive to think outlawing guns will stop crime. It will make criminals of millions of Americans and real criminals will not even notice. Criminals break the law. Duh.

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Letters to the Editor

Another Response to "If It's Not Broken, Don't Fix It"

Dear Editor,

Addressing my comments to the writer of "If It's Not Broken, Don't Fix It," I read your letter to the editor last week and understand your attraction to the area, how you want Union County to remain the way it is. Just about everyone wants that. We all want to be the last ones to move in and close the door behind us, but we all know this just isn't the way things work. I built my house in 1981 when this area was very, very different than it is now. If I had my way back then, I, too, would have closed the door behind me. If I was able to do this, though, you and your wife wouldn't be here to enjoy our beautiful community.

Neither would we have a Walmart, Home Depot, Tractor Supply, or CVS, and you would only have a single, wonderful, local bank to do business with. Our taxes would be far lower, and our single lane roads would still be single lanes and be maintained on a regular and more frequent basis again. We could go into town where there was never any traffic, and the local restaurants would always put iced tea on the table before you even asked for it. In fact, life around here was so simple you might not have liked it at all. I watched a lot of people move here only to leave again because it wasn't quite what they thought it would be.

No doubt some of the very things that attracted you to this area are the things I never

See Antaluk, page 5A

Forgone Conclusion

Dear Editor,

It is a forgone conclusion that getting information on the May 24, 2022, Primary is nearly impossible. The latest step was to get an ORR on Judy Odom, our Superior Court Clerk, for copies of the paper ballots. This request did not require a court order, but she had three days to get back to me. Next day she sent me an email saying that it will take 30 to 45 days to determine if they will do this. District Attorney Jeff Langley did suggest this might be because they need to calculate cost to do this.

On the note, of the Board of Elections admitting they did not do ballot images (as required by Georgia law), I took my recording to Jeff Langley to listen to. He did say that he only prosecutes "crime," or what he called "criminal intent." He did say that he does give the advice to the Grand Jury that the records from the elections (2020, 2022, etc.) not be destroyed, if the BOE request it be done, because of the controversy over the elections.

Marsha Lodes

A Minister's Experience

My father was a minister in many small churches across North Georgia, Southeastern Tennessee and Northern Alabama. He had many entertaining experiences, some of which were sad, some funny and some were rather scary.

For example, back in the early 1970s,

Dad had just made a profession in faith and was baptized into Wallaceville Baptist Church in Chickamauga, Georgia. Our pastor was a man named Milo Knight. Right away Milo took Dad under his wing and began to train him in the ways of becoming a minister. He insisted that Dad drive him to visit people in the hospitals, and the old fellow wouldn't even accept speaking at funerals unless my Dad drove him. One day Dad was called to drive Milo to a funeral on top of Sand Mountain close to Henegar, Alabama.

The pair of men had a drive of about 1.5 hours to get to where the funeral was to be held. Since they had the time, the two of them talked about life and the ways of people in relation to the Church and God. Milo told Dad that he wanted to warn him about the people that would be at the funeral. My father was told to be ready because the relatives of the person being buried would probably like to show out today. The old man explained that he had conducted funerals for these folks in the past, and each time there were certain individuals that wished to make a public display of their love for the one which had died. Dad wasn't a preacher yet and didn't really understand what the old preacher was saying. To further explain, Milo said, "When a person passes to the other side, some people feel guilty because they never came around to visit an older person while that person was still alive. Therefore, they make a big display trying to prove to everyone that they were real close to the one which died."

The pair of men pulled into the churchyard and walked into the church to begin the funeral. Dad was sitting on the front row as the service began. Milo preached the sermon and songs were sang. After the service people began to file by the body of the deceased. The last to come by was the family, and the very last was the youngest daughter of the woman being buried. When the woman viewed her deceased mother in the coffin, she began a long and high-pitched wail. Soon she began to sob, and next she made a lunge to climb into the coffin with her mother. The stand on which the coffin was resting gave way and the coffin containing the dead woman and the daughter turned over, tossing the body toward the congregation. Dad was horrified watching the spectacle. He told me the dead woman ended up laying on top of her

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Chamber of Commerce

If you read my column last week, this is a follow-up to #5, "My Chamber." I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to a few new staff members that I'd love for you to get to know better, and a couple of seasoned staff that deserve a big shout out for all they contribute.

Crystal Wagner, Director of Operations & Marketing - Crystal handles the tourism and marketing for the Chamber as well as promoting our events (and yours) and managing our social media pages and resources. She works closely with the Downtown Development Authority, our local businesses and several other groups to help promote and grow Blairsville-Union County. Crystal also helps me to keep the office moving and on track and is a tremendous asset to the Chamber!

Sheila Freeman, Information Specialist - Sheila is our first face of the Community Center. She is a seasoned veteran and knows everything and everyone (and their momma, their aunt and

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



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in cases in which the Georgia Supreme Court has no exclusive appellate jurisdiction. The Court of Appeals is the court of first review for many civil and criminal cases decided in the trial courts. The purpose of such a review is to correct legal errors or errors of law made at the trial level, not to alter jury verdicts or the outcome of bench trials. The Court of Appeals has fifteen judges who are assigned to one of five panels made up of three judges each. Once a case is assigned to a panel, the judges review the trial transcript, relevant portions of the record and briefs submitted by the attorneys for the parties.

Q5. How are these courts funded?

A5. At the appellate level, salaries and operation expenses are funded from state revenues. Funding for the Superior and Juvenile courts is shared by state and county

funding sources. Limited jurisdiction courts are funded solely by city or county governments.

Q6. Is there any additional oversight on caseloads, etc.?

A6. The Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) was established in 1973 to provide support services to the courts of Georgia. It serves as an administrative arm of the Judicial Council of Georgia. The agency oversees the annual caseload reporting for all classes of courts, staffs Judicial Council Committees and several justice related commissions, sponsors court technology and automation efforts, and produces media content about the Georgia courts for distribution in a variety of formats. In addition, the AOC serves as the fiscal officer for a variety of judicial branch commissions and councils.

Additional Resource: www.georgiacourts.gov

Habitat... continued from Page 4A

desperation that he was experiencing knowing that in a short time, his family would be out of a home. My associate Barbara and I searched for rentals, and as we all know, the rental market is almost nonexistent in North Georgia, especially when pets are involved.

A week went by, and we had still found nothing. Then, I received a phone call at the ReStore. A donor was inquiring about donating a travel trailer to Habitat. I immediately thought of that family in need.

I called the man and told him to come in the ReStore. When he arrived, I let him know that although this is by no means a permanent situation, we would be happy to provide the trailer to his family until they were able to find adequate housing. The

feeling of relief to him and the look on his face I will never forget. The family was able to temporarily rent a lot to put the camper on, and three months later, they were able to get into an apartment.

This was an example of just one of many families in our area looking for affordable rentals. With the rise of popularity in Airbnbs and VRBOs, and being located in the beautiful area we are, long-term rentals are even more unattainable. If you or anyone you know is interested in donating an RV or camper trailer to HFHTUC, contact the ReStore at 706-745-7101. Making a difference in someone's life comes in many shapes and forms, and God surely looked out for this family in a time of need.

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

uncle, and their family tree) so she's the perfect person for you to stop in and talk with when you have questions about the community. Got a good piece of information to share? Come on by and talk with Sheila, she will tell you if it's true or not!

Terri Ross, Membership Coordinator- Terri is the newest member of our team, but you would never be able to tell she is new. She has been out meeting our Chamber members and getting involved every chance that she can. Terri is going to help us take our membership to a whole new level and we couldn't be more excited! If you have a question about your membership, member benefits, or how to become a member - call Terri.

Ashley Miller, Events Coordinator- Ashley handles all of our event planning from the Buy Local Extravaganza, to the golf tournament, and fashion show. Ashley comes with an extensive background in event planning and has a lot of great ideas for our local

events. Want to get your promotional items in the hands of event participants, sponsor one of our events, or reserve a seat for an upcoming event? Ashley is the one to call! If you haven't spoken with her to reserve your booth at the Buy Local Extravaganza or reserved your seat for Rennie Curran, you are going to regret not participating!

Stacy Cleversey, Administrative Assistant- Stacy is our behind-the-scenes team member that handles accounts receivable/payable, weekly email communications, and special projects. Need to make a payment or have a question about your invoice? Call Stacy.

These are our team members that help the Chamber set and achieve the big goals for our members and community. If you don't know these ladies, please drop in at the Chamber office or introduce yourself at one of our next events.

Thanks to our team for helping to make life Better in Blairsville.

Antalik... continued from Page 4A

wanted to see come here. So, my point is that change is inevitable, it's the one constant we all have to deal with. The best we can try to do is understand that there is "good" change and "not so good" change and hope we get more of one than

the other.

When you say you don't want Union County to change, just keep in mind that you are here because of the very change that you say you don't want.

Dean Antalik

well, good men do better; for good laws may lack good men and be abolished or invaded by ill men; but good men will never lack good laws nor allow bad ones."

We believe you would agree with me that a few good men and women are desperately needed today in our government.

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

Citizens For A Better America August meeting

Calling all patriots! There is a meeting of Citizens For A Better America and you are invited. Thursday, August 18, eat at 5 PM, meeting is at 6-7:30 at the Brasstown Community Center, 55 Settawig Road, Brasstown. There will be a food truck on site.

Everyone is invited and bring a friend. United we stand!

For more information: Website: <http://www.CitizensForABetterAmerica.com>; email: Contact@CitizensForABetterAmerica.com; call: (828) 361-5422.

S.A.F.E. Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors of S.A.F.E. (Support in Abusive Family Emergencies, Inc.) will be August 15, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. Call 706-379-1901 for location.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

daughter, causing her to panic and scream. The pallbearers came to the rescue and got the body placed back into the coffin, allowing the service to resume. Afterwards, Milo explained that each time he conducts a funeral for this family something similar happens.

Later my father became a minister and late in his career he went to a church in Southeastern Tennessee. He soon became friends with a minister up on the Cumberland Plateau. This fellow asked Dad to go with him to a see a man which had been bitten by a big rattlesnake. Dad and the old preacher went way back in the woods over close to Tracy City. They drove down a gravel road for many miles and eventually came to the house to which they were going. They pulled into the yard and noticed 8-10 vehicles parked around the home. They were escorted into the house where they found an old man laying in bed surrounded by five or six of his sons and a few daughters.

The old man asked the old Preacher to pray for him. He bowed his head and said, "Father, thank you for the opportunity of talking with this foul sinner and his sons. Lord you will remember I asked you to send a snake to bite this man and you did. Thank you Lord for sending the snake because I can now talk to him about Jesus." Dad told me later that he just knew that man's sons were going to hog tie and skin him and the old preacher. But, the opposite happened. That old man and all of his sons accepted Jesus and joined the old Preacher's congregation.

A few years later Dad and Mom were at a new church close to Dunlap, Tennessee. Dad heard about a man that was lost and needed the Lord. So, he and Mom went to visit this man and his family. They drove way back in the woods on a one-lane road. After a few miles they rounded a curve and came upon a man in the middle of the road. Dad stopped and rolled down his window. This fellow asked Dad what he needed. Dad explained that he needed to visit Old Man Jones so he could invite him to his church. This fellow grinned and said, "We appreciate you coming up here to invite us to church. But, you can't come in here on Tuesday afternoons. Would you mind coming back on Wednesday or Thursday?"

Williams...**continued from Page 4A**

used on clothing to kill chiggers and ticks.

Chiggers are very aggravating to have, but hopefully this article has given you some options for how to deal with chigger bites and how to prevent them from getting on you. If you have questions about chiggers contact your county Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Fowler...**continued from Page 4A**

Martha Berry never married. She dedicated her treasure, land, and life to serve others. It was a simple gesture when she sat down with a few poor kids to teach them Bible stories. She couldn't have known how that one act of obedience would change not only their lives, but hers also.

Here is your takeaway. If you want to live a meaningful life and leave a generational legacy as a powerful rejoinder to our era's unapologetic selfishness, then believe and follow Jesus. That means living by His words, "not to be ministered unto but to minister."

Tarter...**continued from Page 4A**

Outlawing guns will give potential tyrants even more control over us, just watch the news. And that is their goal.

On the surface, doesn't it seem incongruous that the same politicians who would sacrifice 3,000 babies a day on the altar of abortion claim to want to save lives by banning legal ownership of guns?

If you want to have a defensive or sporting firearm, first get training from a qualified NRA or other instructor and practice. And then practice some more.

But don't kid yourselves with corrupt politicians' silly talking points.

J. Murray Tarter

Dyer...**continued from Page 4A**

Chad Deyton and his staff for allowing us to perform the walk through and for all the assistance that they provide to the department.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Your Patriot Reflection**A Few Good Men, or Women**

We're in need of a few good men and women in our government. You might be saying, "But we do have a few good men and women!" Maybe we should go a step further: We need good men and women in government who have the best interest of all in mind as they govern, not their own interest. Those who will lead with virtue and morality, not political or selfish aspirations. William Penn does a better job explaining than we can. He said, "Governments, like clocks, go from the motion men give them; and as governments are made and moved by men, so by them they are ruined too. Wherefore governments rather depend upon men than men upon governments. Let men be good and the government cannot be bad... But if men be bad they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their turn... Though good laws do