# **Opinions**

## Everybody has one...

### **Habitat for Humanity**

In a previous article, I discussed how home environment directly correlates to a child's development, academic achievement, and ability to thrive in society. Last week, I came across a group at Cabin Coffee that sparked an interest relating to this topic. A local group in Union County that calls themselves the US Men's Academy.

The group, ran by Dustin Barnes, Nathan Dean, Justin Salver, and Joe Paisley, is an advocacy of catering the needs of young men through a masculine, Christian curriculum. The curriculum centers on positive



leadership, and prioritizes outdoor survival techniques. appreciation of nature, fitness, nutrition, Christian social roles, and community service.

The organization is dedicated to investing in the future of our children within our community, just as Habitat is dedicated to bettering the living situations of our youth. Positive male role models in a child's life are shown to improve social skills, academic achievement, and are less likely to end up in a habitual cycle of crime and drugs. Dustin Barnes states, "The new US Men's Academy

is building the first Christian fraternity for young men and fathers in Union County known as the 'Lighthouse Squadron.' An independent organization managed by fathers for young men, it will be especially enriching for families who have fathers that deploy, travel for work, or need positive role models for their boys." Investing in our future community involves invest-

sums up the crucialness of investing into the children of our community. From Aristotle: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, there-

ing in our children's lives. The quote from their website

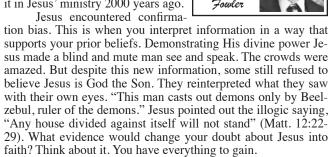
fore, is not an act, but a habit." To contact and donate to this cause, or find information on how to enroll your child, visit their website at www.usmensacademy.com.

## **Clear Thinking**

because neuroscientists say your brain processes far more unconscious thoughts than conscious. So, you may not even be aware of what you are thinking or why. You may not be thinking clearly.

Cognitive bias is another term for fast-thinking shortcuts. The human brain is lazy and prefers to seek patterns rather than doing the hard work of processing

new information and re-evaluating prior conclusions. Modern neuroscience seeks to understand this phenomenon, but it's always been part of the human experience. We can see it in Jesus' ministry 2000 years ago.



Jesus also encountered the anchoring bias, which is relying accept His offer of a new identity in Christ.

The third cognitive bias I'll mention is the bandwagon effect. That's finding comfort in believing what everyone else does. going along with the crowd. In His home synagogue, Jesus read a powerful prophecy about the promised Messiah (Isa. 61) then said, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled" (Luke 4:21). They

The PREDICTIONS

### **Commissioner's Questions**

While seasonal influenza (flu) viruses are detected yearround in the United States, flu viruses typically circulate during the fall and winter during what's known as the flu season. The exact timing and duration of flu seasons varies. Most of the time flu activity peaks between December and February, although significant activity can last as late as May. This week's questions address questions we sometimes receive about the flu, flu shots, and expecta-

tions of those who contract the flu.

to remind our residents that each year

influenza affects a lot of people in

County have the flu?

Q. Do a lot of people in Union

A. Not yet, however, I just want

from Union County Commissioner

Paris

rus can cause serious illness or even death if not treated properly. Compound that with COVID-19 cases and hospitals could find themselves short of beds and staff this winter.

Union County, across Georgia, and the entire country. The flu vi-

Q. Is it too late to get a flu shot at the Union County **Health Department?** 

A. IT'S NOT TOO LATE! If you haven't already had the flu shot, please consider getting one now. Vaccines are available at the health department and from many other providers and pharmacies around the county. The flu shot protects against multiple strains of flu like H1N1 and Influenza B and is a good match for those types of flu. CDC reported that influenza activity could last

Q. How do you usually contract the flu virus?

A. Flu viruses travel through the air in droplets when someone with the infection coughs, sneezes, or talks (similar to COVID-19). You can inhale the droplets directly, or you can pick up the germs from an object — such as a telephone or computer keyboard — and then transfer them to your eyes, nose or mouth. To avoid this, people should stay away from sick people and stay home if sick. It is also important to wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This routine should sound very familiar in this day and time of COVID-19.

Q. When someone sneezes, how far can the germs travel? A. Up to 20 feet if you do not cover your sneeze with your hand or preferably covering your mouth with your elbow or hand-

See Paris, page 5A

Chamber of Commerce

Many communities in North Georgia were

#### **Letters to the Editor**

#### Runoffs

Dear Editor,

It is now obvious that a runoff is in the works. I would love to see the PAC's stand aside and have the candidates tell us what qualifies them for a position in the Senate representing their constituents and where they stand on the real issues. What platform do you stand on so I know my vote counts for my views of this great Democracy? It is the holiday season, and I don't want

my good cheer to be battered constantly with anxiety advertising. Oh, to see the Black Friday ads again! In Health,

Irene Stannard

#### **Thank You**

Dear Editor,

Recently I had surgery at Union General to replace my right hip. After the three days in Union, I was transferred to Chatuge Regional Hospital to what they call "swingbed" rehab. I was there for 15 of the most rewarding days I have spent anywhere. These folks are the absolute best at what

they do and provide the most "in-house" comprehensive rehab a person can get after surgery. The nursing staff go well beyond what you would expect of them. They give the patients the best care and make sure everyone is treated with Recovery from surgery is scary, but this

group of dedicated professionals take it all in stride. Everyone in this facility does everything they can to make you comfortable and spe your recovery. The Physical Therapists (I call them "Ter-

rorists") make sure you progress at the pace you can do to succeed and get well. The Occupational Therapists show you how to do everyday things

while you are incapacitated to make your transition back to normal as smooth as possible. In closing, I want to thank all the Nurses, CNAs, Therapists, helpers, maintenance and Dietitians for all they do. Thank You.

Timoney Massey

### **Congratulations**

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to Tony Hunter on his election win for another term on the school board. I wish the board well as it tackles the important job of ensuring that every single student achieves his or her full potential. Our schools work best when we invest in every child regardless of strengths or needs. We look to this school board to make that happen. Best Wishes! Sincerely.

Michelle Maloney

### Jesus Is All You Need

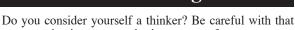
Dear Editor,

There is a song that starts out like this: If Jesus comes tomorrow. What then? Interesting thought to ponder as we see our world slowly falling apart from the inside out and there seems to be no let up, for the Bible is very clear that in the last days, meaning before Christ returns to gather His faithful followers unto Himself forever, that more and more birth pangs will get stronger and more violent than ever.

Folks who don't know the Lord God will care less about this article because they don't believe in the cross of Calvary. They don't believe that there is a God above watching everything that His creation does with a keen eye and a sad heart because of their unbelief, yet He still loves them and wants that all come to the saving knowledge of who Jesus Christ really is.

Every person ever born into this world needs to make a decision based on their faith if they believe in God, the Father and His son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. They are 3-in-1, and without faith in the Trinity there is no hope for eternal life in heaven. Even Satan who once was an angel believes that there is a God, but

See Combs, page 5A



All Things

New

Wayne

tion bias. This is when you interpret information in a way that supports your prior beliefs. Demonstrating His divine power Jesus made a blind and mute man see and speak. The crowds were amazed. But despite this new information, some still refused to believe Jesus is God the Son. They reinterpreted what they saw with their own eyes. "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul, ruler of the demons." Jesus pointed out the illogic saying, 'Any house divided against itself will not stand" (Matt. 12:22-

only on the first information you receive. After He fed thousands of people with five loaves and two fish, some followed Him because they were anchored to the free food. "You seek Me," Jesus said, "because you ate of the loaves and were filled." He tried to get them to move beyond that. "I am the bread of life," He said. 'Everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life" (John 6). Are you anchored to incomplete first impressions? There's more to truth than the pain a Christian might have caused you. There's more to God's love if you have yet to

See Fowler, page 5A

### known for their mining of gems, but we have a hidden gem of a different sort right here in Blairsville, the Union County Fine Arts Center. The Fine Arts Center is home to the Union County Middle School and Union County High School theatre programs, led by experienced theatre instructors and joined by some of the most talented theatre students in the area. Unlike

County Chamber Steve Rowe many theatre programs, the Fine Arts Center focuses not only on performance, but also on all

Blairsville

aspects of theatre, including set design, lighting, and costume-making. Students at the Fine Arts Center develop a wide range of skills and talents that are essential for success both on and off the stage. Whether they are working backstage or performing in front of an audience, these theatre students truly embody what it means to be a fine artist. If you're looking for an evening of highquality entertainment or just want to soak up the passion and dedication of these aspiring actors See Chamber, page 5A

### Cohesive Wildland Strategy

This week, Kim and I (and Linda) are attending the Fifth Annual National Cohesive Strategy Workshop in Asheville, North Carolina. I know it is a tough job, but somebody

The National Cohesive Wildland Fire

Management Strategy is a strategic push to work collaboratively among stakeholders and across all landscapes, using best science, to make



meaningful progress towards the three goals: Resilient Landscapes; Fire Adapted Communities; and Safe and Effective Wildfire Response. The National Cohesive Wildland Management Strategy represents the culmination of the three-phased Cohesive Strategy effort initiated in 2009. The National Strategy establishes a national vision for wildland fire management, describes the wildland fire challenges, identifies opportunities to reduce wildfire risks, and establishes national priorities focused on achieving the national goals.

The National Strategy explores four broad challenges: Managing vegetation and fuels; Protecting homes, communities, and other values at risk; Managing human-caused ignitions; and Effectively and efficiently respond-ing to wildfire. The wildland fire environment in the United States is undergoing profound ecological, social, and political changes. We are witnessing escalating wildland fire behavior, increasing risk to responders, significant losses of homes and property, dramatic growth in suppression costs, rising post-fire impacts, continued injuries and loss of lives, and more frequent fire occurrence in wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas causing significant losses to communities and economies. Some characterize these recent unprecedented events as the "new normal" or perhaps more accurately, the

There are many challenges ahead and much to learn. The differences between the environments of yesterday and tomorrow, and what is responsible for these differences must be understood. Recognition of the importance of wildland fire as a key component of healthy ecosystems deeply rooted in the mix of social, ecological, and management requirements is essential. A paradigm is defined as "a typical example or pattern of something; a model." Managing resources and fire as "typical" events or placing an over-reliance on past practices and "business as usual" on our landscape and in our communities cannot succeed in the rapidly changing environment of the future.

See Riley, page 5A

### Yankee Cousins

Papa's younger sister, Inez, lost her husband in a car accident when their son, Harold, was a baby. Inez decided to begin a new life, so she went to Chicago to live with her brother Clay. She soon found a job and met a fellow that would become her husband. John Porcurro was

one of the kindest persons you would ever want to know. Inez and John were happy, and soon another young man was born to the family. His name was



also John. Everyone called him Little John. Those two boys loved visiting their family in Alabama, and they greatly admired their two cousins, Paul and Bud. Harold and Little John were easy targets for their older cousins. The schemes they fell into were easily hatched by my father and uncle. The first one of note happened one morning at the crack of daylight. The first chore of the day for Dad and Uncle Bud was to milk the family's two milk cows. Harold and Little John were so excited about milking these cows that sleep evaded them on the night prior to the event. The next morning the four boys walked to the barn while Little John and Harold shot question after question toward their cousins. Imagine a Chicago accent with these words. "Paul, how does the cow make milk? Bud, where does the milk come out of the cow? Will the cow kick you?" When asked where they got their milk in Chicago, Harold replied, "From the store." Dad asked his cousins if they would like

to milk a cow and, of course they did. Dad explained, "Go into that lot and catch that little cow. One of you should hold onto the neck and the other should place the milk bucket under the cow. Afterwards, you should pump the tail up and down and the milk will come out into the bucket." Papa was working on his tractor when he began to hear laughter coming from the barnyard. Papa looked across the yard toward the barn and watched as his nephews were drug, kicked and stomped by the 400-pound calf. About a week later the boys decided they would go squirrel hunting. At the bottom of a

bluff the boys noticed a big hornet's nest up a white oak tree. Harold and Little John decided to shoot the thing down and take it home. Dad and Uncle Bud grinned while presenting Harold with the gun. Uncle Bud said, "Wait til we get to the top of the bluff so we can watch from that vantage point." Dad and his brother watched their two younger cousins get stung about 20 times by a bunch of angry hornets. Papa whipped his two sons over this incident. Dad tried to explain, "When Harold and Johnny made up their mind to do something there was no talking them out

See Cummings, page 5A

### White Pines

White pines are a common tree in the mountains. They have a couple of interesting features and are a native tree so let's talk about white pines, some of their benefits and draw-

The scientific name for white pines is Pi-

nus strobus L. They can be found from southern Canada, down along the Ap-Mounpalachian tains to North Georgia and Alabama. They are the biggest



native conifer in Eastern North America. They can grow up to 150 feet tall and have a trunk that is 40 inches in diameter. The canopy can grow to 40 feet wide. They're capable of growing 2 feet in a year. They are able to tolerate a variety of soil textures. Pines like soils that have a low pH. That's one of the reasons why we have many pines. It also means that if you clear an area that had lots of pines in it, you'll most likely need to add lime to that soil before most things will grow well.

They are suited to USDA zones 3-8. They used to be used for ships' masts, and were a ma-

jor export from Colonial America. The cones from white pines are 4 to 8 inches long. The needles come in clusters of five. The needles are 2.5 to 5 inches long, making them medium sized for pines. The easiest way to tell what is a white pine that I've found is from the color of the needles. They have a greenish, white color to them.

White pines have a very nice Christmas tree shape to them. Some people grow them for this purpose. I suppose you could grow one in your front yard and have a giant Christmas tree in 20 years. They also have ornamental use. If they are planted densely, you can shear them and turn them into a hedge. There is a number of wildlife species that eat the seeds including squirrels, deer, mice, and songbirds. White pines are commonly used as windbreaks and screens. I have seen some old stands of white pines planted along property lines or along a bank for erosion control.

Large white pines can be problematic during the wintertime. The needles can hold a lot of precipitation that can freeze. This can lead to limbs breaking off. Therefore, it's best to plant them in places where there is no threat of them falling onto structures or vehicles.

The white pine weevil is a major pest of white pines. They will usually feed on trees that are 20 feet tall or less. They will chew on the current year's terminal leader, killing the current year's growth. Usually the tree is able to keep growing by sending up another branch to be-

See Williams, page 5A

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## Paris... continued from Page 4A kerchief to contain the germs. ness is different from

This practice is a good idea whether flu season or not.

Q. Is the flu highly con-

tagious?

A. Yes, it is, and this year more so than in most years

## Q. If you have flu, how is it cured?

A. There's no cure, but the symptoms of flu can be treated with antivirals, overthe-counter medicines, and natural remedies. If you have flu symptoms, you should consult your health care provider. Some common suggestions

1. Stay home and get plenty of rest. Mind your flu manners. On the first day you have symptoms, call your work or school and tell them you won't be coming in for a few days. You're sick -- and very contagious! Take advantage of down time and give your body some much-needed rest. Curl up on the couch and spend some time reading, watching DVDs, or just cat-napping while your body battles the virus.

2. Drink plenty of fluids. Make sure you get plenty of liquids. It doesn't all have to be water -- fruit juices, sports drinks, and broth-based soups (like chicken noodle soup) also count. They keep your respiratory system hydrated and turn that thick mucus into a thin liquid you can cough up. If it builds up in your lungs in large amounts, it could lead to more serious complications or ill-

3. Treat aches and fever. Got fever? That's because your body has turned up the heat to fight off the flu virus. This ill-

ness is different from a cold. While more than 100 different viruses can cause a cold, only influenza virus types A, B, and C cause the flu. Type A and B viruses cause the large seasonal outbreaks. Type C usually causes milder respiratory symptoms.

### Q. How can you tell if ou have the flu?

you have the flu? A. Flu symptoms are usually more severe than cold symptoms and come on quickly. Symptoms of the flu include sore throat, fever, headache, muscle aches and soreness, congestion, fatigue and cough. A few indirect complications might also include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes. A quick test from you doctor can confirm the diagnosis.

## Q. How long should you stay home from work if you have the flu?

A. The CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone - except to get medical care or other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine

### Q. How long does the flu last?

A. The flu typically lasts one to two weeks, with severe symptoms subsiding in two to three days. However, weakness, fatigue, dry cough, and a reduced ability to exercise can linger for three to seven days.

If you have had the crud or the flu this season, you know how horrible it can be. We hope you are feeling better soon.

## ${f Riley}$ ... continued from Page 4A

As stakeholders, we must enthusiastically reject letting our recent experiences allow a future wildland fire paradigm to be shaped solely by unchecked fuel accumulation, larger and more intense wildfires, unacceptable fire behavior, and undesirable impacts to societal values. We must continue to utilize sound science, actively support the principles and management options within the framework of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and be proactive in our management practices and actions to address these mounting challenges. Only then can we expect to achieve our desired wildfire outcomes and establish a new paradigm of resilient landscapes, fire adapted communities and a safe and effective wildfire response.

The National Cohesive Strategy pushes us to challenge our current and historical approaches to our nation's changing rapidly realities and reach beyond our jurisdictional borders to: redefine and understand risk, share and co-manage risk, set large, landscape-level and community-wide priorities, and collectively invest in an outcome-based approach to achieve resilient landscapes, fire adapted communities and a safe, effective wildfire response. As we stand on the precipice of a new wildland fire paradigm, we have the opportunity to define it, not be

defined by it.

The vision of the Cohesive Strategy is to safely and effectively extinguish fire, when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as a Nation, live with wildland fire. To maintain and strengthen meaningful progress towards this vision, the 5th Annual National Cohesive Strategy Workshop will provide a forum unlike others for collaborative interaction. It will provide an innovative, shared-learning environment for exploration, discussion, understanding, brainstorming, connection, and collaboration around the issues we must face to improve outcomes related to wildland fire. It will allow stakeholders to understand their roles and the opportunities for outcome-based approaches through continued and active implementation of the National Cohesive Strategy and how this will allow us to define a future with wildland fire as a key component of healthy ecosystems that meet social and management requirements.

OurAppalachianRC&D FAC Coalition of 6 RC&Ds will have an interactive presentation on our wildland fire projects in the Appalachians to the national audience gathered in Asheville.

For more information on National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy: www.forestandrangelands.gov.

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

and actresses, this is truly a must-see venue. The theatre may be putting on an original one-act written by their peers or reviving classic plays like Les Miserables or Cats, and these students truly bring the theatre to life. So, if you want to experience all that the arts have to offer in your own backyard, be sure to visit Union County Fine Arts today, you won't be disap-

Check their calendar for future performances including:
November 12th – Beauty and the Beast, UCHS Musical

pointed!

Nov 17th – UCMS Theatre: "Wishful Thinking" & "McQuadle: A Dragon Tale"

Dec 1st - UCMS Theatre: "Order Up!" & Complaint Department and Lemonade

Dec 2nd & 3rd UCHS PLAY: The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

Gather up the family and go enjoy a performance worthy of a New York City stage and support our local Middle School and High School students!

The "Hidden Gems" are better in Blairsville!

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

because Satan wanted to be like God, he was banished to earth and soon will be thrown into the lake of fire with his demons called hell for eternity, and those who rejected the Savior Christ Jesus will go to hell if one doesn't accept Jesus and confess their sins and repent.

Yes, God is a loving God and a gracious God who never intended for anyone to go to hell, but again that is a choice you will have to live with forevermore in eternity.

We all have lost family members and dear friends who have not made the right decision to follow Christ, but like the song says: If Jesus comes tomorrow. What then? Don't let Satan throw you a curve ball in believing that there is no God to fear. That would be

like saying there is no heaven or hell which I know is real as the breath that Almighty God lets me take to bring Him all praise and glory. Frank F. Combs

## Williams... continued from Page 4A

come the terminal leader. However, this will result in a forked tree. Dying terminal leaders will have a shepherd's crook shape to them. Trees grown in partial shade are less affected by the white pine weevil.

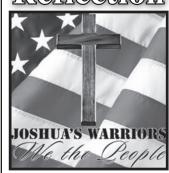
White pines can be a great addition to a landscape. If you have questions about white pines contact you County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

of it. They have to learn by experience. I bet they never shoot another hornets' nest."

Another week passed and the boys decided to go opossum hunting. The dogs treed up a big hemlock. Next, the dogs ran something into a hole in the ground. So, Dad cut a long slender hickory and sharpened one end. The sharp end of the limb was pushed into the hole until it hit something soft. Then Dad twisted the limb until the critter's fur was wrapped around the limb. This technique allowed Dad to pull the big fat opossum out of the hole. Harold and Little John were amazed at the skills of their two cousins. Later, on the way back home, the dogs struck another track and again chased a critter into a hole. As the boys got to the hole, Dad smelled something and stated they should go on home. But, Harold and Little John wanted to pull another critter from the hole in the ground. So, Dad cut another hickory stick and told

# Your Patriot Reflection



**State of the Republic** Have you paused lately and pondered the state of our Republic and then considered what the future will be like for your children and grandchildren? What cost are we willing to pay to secure their right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Samuel Adams, faced with similar reflections, and embroiled in a fierce struggle for the same rights, wrote this: "The liberties of our Country, the freedom of our civil constitution are worth defending at all hazards: And it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair Inheritance from our worthy Ancestors: They purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood; and transmitted them to us with care and diligence. It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy on the present generation, enlightened as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle; or be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men. Of the latter we are in most danger at present: Let us therefore be aware of it. Instead of sitting down satisfied with the efforts we have already made, which is the wish of our enemies, the necessity of the times, more than ever, calls for our utmost circumspection, deliberation, fortitude, and perseverance. Let us remember that "if we suffer tamely a lawless attack upon our liberty, we encourage it, and involve others in our doom." It is a very serious consideration, which should deeply impress our minds, that millions yet unborn may

event".

The onus is on each of us to ensure the future for those who come behind us.

be the miserable sharers of the

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

### **Bell Ringing**



November 19, 2022
In loving memory of
Billy Decker
on the 3rd anniversary
of his passing

Union County Historical Society November 22, 2022 In memory of Hazel Herndon

In remembrance of her birthday on November 20th and her passing on November 15th Mr. & Mrs. Tim Herndon

Bell ringing information at 706-745-5493

his cousins to get going. "Bud and I will be making our way back to the house." Dad and Uncle Bud walked 100 yards away and watched as their cousins pulled a skunk from the hole. The boys got home and the smell woke up Papa and Granny. Their clothes had to be burned, and the young men washed in buttermilk and then in tomato juice, which re-

moved most of the smell.

After Harold and Little
John went home, Papa, Granny,
Dad and Uncle Bud were sitting around the dinner table and
Uncle Bud asked his Daddy,
"Are Paul and I as dumb as our
cousins?" Papa tried to hide his
laugh, but, a chuckle escaped
as he replied, "I hope not."

## Fowler...

### continued from Page 4A

all became enraged that He claimed to be the Messiah and led Him out intending to throw Him down a cliff. Just because lots of folks agree doesn't make it true. "The way is narrow that leads to life," Jesus said, "and few find it." (Matt. 7:14).

Honest thinkers analyze their thoughts for biases and incomplete conclusions. They don't mind being in the minority. When it comes to answering ultimate questions about God, faith, eternal destiny, and yourself, use your God-given ability to think clearly. Don't be victimized by cognitive bias.