## Opinions

## EMAG Conference

Emergency management is something that most people
me is out there but they do not know much about it. They assume is out there but they do not tnow much about it. They
have heard of FMA (Federal Emergency Management Agen-
cy) State of Gergia. Each county has a local Emergency Management Agency (EMA) as well. AlI are and major emergencies. the Emergency Management Asso ciation or Georgia (EMAG), which
is an organization that assists the is an organization that assists the
local EMAs with performing their
roles EMAG

$$
\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline \begin{array}{l}
\text { Fire Dept. } \\
\text { from Union } \\
\text { cound } \\
\text { Fire } \\
\text { Finief } \\
\text { Danide }
\end{array} & \\
D_{y o} & \\
\hline
\end{array}
$$ roles. EMAG has two conferencese each year that provide train-

ing and information to the local EMAs. The latest conference was held at Brasstown Valley Resort in Young Harris. Several members of Union County EMA attended this conference.
The first class that was attended was a Rescue Operations Training Workshop. The class presentation was a first viewing of the easis Search and Rescue class that is seming deveveloped by
the training division of GEMA. The workshop involved getting the training division of GEMA. The workshop involved getting
feedback from the persons attending the class to determine if feedback from the persons attending the class to determine if
there needed to be any additions or subtractions to the class. There was a great deal of feedback and discussion about how EMA oparate sarcran and rescueve in their area of the state
Search and rescue is a revurar operation in our EMA, Search and rescuev is a regular operation in our EMA,
mainly because of the hiking trails in the county, including the Appalachian Trall. Of the over 5 miles of Appalachian Trail
in Georgia, 39 miles are within or border Union County. We respond to approximately 50 missions each year ranging from locating a person to extracting them from the trail. The search
and rescue workshop was helpful and Union Crunty was proud to make a contribution.
The other class attended was Testing Emergency Opera-
tions Plans in a Rural Emergency Operations Center. This class was a FEMA class that included processes to review and test our Emergency Operations Plan. It also include information on
how to better utilize the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

## Everybody has one...

Marvin Olasky is an academic, an author, and a Presby-
That's why it's an eyebrow-raiser when he tells about terian. That's why it's an eyebro
his solitary mystical experience.
was In his book, "Lament for a Father," Olasky explains he was an atheist (and Marxist) pursuing a Ph.D. .in Americican
Culture in the 1970.s. One afternoon he was reading Lenin.
c"We ("We must combat religion.. It is
the opium for the peopl.") He
became distracted and fell
Hint a the opium for the people.") He
became distracted and fell into a
tranclike stat.
corridor wat with closed do in a dark corridor withe closed doors on both
sides. He pushed one open and sides. He pushed one open, and ex--
perieneca an exposion of light He
knew it was Goo. For the next eight All Thing
New
Wamer
Jouler
 hourss he eat still while his mind raced with
wandered the campus in the cold and dark
next morning, he was no longer an an atheist.

Russian, focusing on each word. He read, "'st's's gospel in Ressian, focusing on each word. He read, "The Child who has
been concieved in (Mary) Is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear
and a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His
people from their sins" (Matt.1:20-21) He did not want be be peophe frim their siss (Mat. 1:20-21). He did not want to be
a Christian, but over the next three years he journeyed toward the truth about Jesus. He was a a professor at San Diego State
when he embraced faith in Jesus when he embraced faith in Jesus as hiss savior
Unlike Olasky Richard Dawkins is still
Dawkins likes Chrisk, Richard trad Dawkins is stitla an atheist. But
 That also, escsibibes shurch atatendees who reiect the virinin birth and other miracles. If no supernatural or spiritual reality exists,
then Jesus was only an attractive (and deceptive) reli gionist then Jesus was only an attractive (and deceptive) religionist
who impressed his followers so much that they thought they saw him alive after he died.
To reject miracles is to reject the Jesus of the Bible. Ac-
cept them and "you have a Savior who came voluntarily ;ito cept them and "you have a Savior who came voluntarily into
this world for our salvation suffered for our sins upon the triss world for our satvation, suffered for our sins upon the
cross, rose again from the dead by the power of God...The
diferenec betweet difference between those two ovews is the difference e between
two totally diverse religions" (Gresham Machen, 'Christianity two totally dive
\& Liberalism")

## Commissioner's Questions

Our office has reeceived various questions about public water
Union County and about Lake Nottley. Though I have spoke in Union County and about Lake Nottley. Though I have spoker
on this topic in the past, $I$ was asked to address certain concern on this topic in the past,
for the sake of new residents.
Q. Does Union County operate a public water system?
A. No. Coosa Water Authority and Notla Water Aus are independent lesislatively enacted entities that are not controlled by
Union County or the City of Blairs-
vile The
 board of directors who are voted into
office by the water users in their area office by the water users in their area.
To clarify Union County does not operate a public water systsem.
Q. How are the $W$

## separated?

A. Coosa Water Authority mostly covers wes indie ville along the Blue Ridge Highway and parts of Owitown. The
have apprity have approximately 1,750 water customers. Notla Water Author-
ity mostly have approximately 5.860 watern customers. The City of Blairs ville provides water to the city and their services extend sliaghty out of town in all directions and including the Airport Industrial
Park and Many of those are commercial accounts.
Q. Why don't you leave the Nottley Lake at full pool roug This is a sore spot with some lake homeowners as well as those
who enjey Who enjoy lake recreation. However, Lake Noteley is owned by
the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and the county has abso lutly no authority when it comes to determining the water levels.
 TVA organization balances many proirities when it comes to wa-
ter levels. Recreation is not their primary concern. Flood control 1 ant evels. Recreation is not their primary conce
and power generation are two of their priorities
and power generation are two of their prorities.
Q. Does TV change the lake levels differently at certain times of the year?
es very recently. During the summer they do a pretty good job During the summer they do a pretty good job

## Habitat for Humanity

 Thanks to everyone who came to theCourthouse on the Square on Saturday for our first "Christmas Present Wrapping Event", In case you missed it, shoppers could bring thei
purchases to the Courthouse on Saturday $11 / 27$, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Habitat vol-
unteers would wrap up their purchases
in exchange for a in exctiange A great
domat
time was had by all donation. A great
time was had by all,
and we have lans
to make this
nual event!


The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce encourages its members to deco-
rate a tree at the Community Center (up by the rate a tree at the Community Center (up by the
golf course). Our Habita Afflilite always participatess in this, and this year is no different.
Tint Thankss to Donan Towery one of our faithtul
volunters for helping reate many of the volunteers, for helpping create many of the orna
ments on Habitat's tree, and taking the time to ments on Habitats stree, and taking the time to
put it il t together. It's so cute! The ornaments pur in in the shaperer of tools socute . The ornaments
are hases, and it has are
a hard hat for a treo-topper! Be sure and stop

## Letters to the Editor

## Goodbye Blairsville

Dear Editor,
time now could notice what has whap livenes here full town and county? We are no longener a rural city - welcome to the new suburb of Atlanta. Ste-
reos blasting everywhere, choking traffic from one end of 129 to the other. And just try getting to a restaurant at lunch hour or even trough
town with people pulling out in tront of you town with people pulling out in front of yout
everywhere. Everyone's in a big hurry, tailgating, speeding for no apparent reason except to get somewhere faster, never mind leaving a little early to get where you need to beo on itime
All our roads are being trashed with liter."Me All our roads are being trashe.
I guess people moving here didn't twant that They come in and cut down all our beautiful
trees, then they plant grass and spend ever trees, then they plant grass and spend every
other day on a rididng lawnmower. There is no place leff for the poor deer and orther animals to goo People driving around with no muffers or
catalytic converter polluting the air with their cataykinconvirters lotion.
stink and noise pollution.

> | See Eckman, page 5A |
| :---: |
| Lake Nottely, Health |

Dear Editor,
The quality of the water in Lake Notelely
been a concern for many residents of Unio has bety for yearrs. This missue resecheds of Union point when blacar.-colioredsueachateated from a a alang-
fill, containing toxic PFAS, was being added to the City of Blairsville wastewater triatmen
plant (WTP). The WTP dischares into But plant (WTP). The WTP discharges into But
ternut Creek and then into Nottely River jusd
befor before it merges with Coosa Creek to form the mouth of the Lake,
In two emails, I asked the Commissioner
how the County was addressing the Lake health how the County was addressing the Lake health
issues. His answer was:
Osither than our assoLissues. . ins answer was. Sther than our asso.
ciation with Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition, we do not perform water quality testing,",
and, "I agree with you that there should be a and, "I agree with you that there should bbe
regular "lake health' regular "lake health' report of some kind from
someone, at least annually." He continued that the County has complete confidence in HRWC (now MountainTrue)
port, there appears to be contradictory and generalized statements that are not supported by their data (mountaintrue.org and aas.gaepd.
org): "Lakes are largely
unbothered by E. coli and other Pathogens"; "Twenty twenty-one has
been kind to Hiwassee Lake, Lake Chatuge ben kind to Hiwassec Lake, Lake Chatuge
and Late Notetel. All three produced a total of and Late Notelel. All three produced a total of
11 readings with zer E . coli or other patho-
See Toranbene page 5 A


Letters to the Editor Thanksgiving Thoughts Dear Editor,
giving last waek? your favorite part of Thanksis always precious. Helping to serve meals at your local church is al alays rewarding. Sititing
down at a full-course meal loaded with turke mashed potatoes and stuffing with gravy of course is a joy indeed. Saying thanks in prayer
o God for all the provisions He has given ust partake of is is essntial, for all things do come from Him. Don't ever think we can boast of anything we have done on our own. All things
come from God's gracious hands of love. We come from God's gracious hands of love. We
sing a song in church that goes something like this: Thank you Lord for giving to me salvation
Salvation for humanity was paid at a geavy cost of Jesus Christ's life on an old rugged cross that Christians sing often to remind
us that we have been blessed greatly of God for sending His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins, thus bringing us salvation so rich and so free. What
we do afterwards depends on our allegiance to Christ and what He expects from us who have christ and what He expects from us who have
chosen Him as our Lord and Savior. Nothing comes free in this sinful life. There are always consequences to our actions, and how we serve love Him. Thank you Jesus for giving to us the gift
of eternal life and the blessed assurance that,
when we close this final when we close this final chapter of our life and
die, we are immediately ushered into glory by die, we are immediately ushered into glory by
an angel of God, and there we shall live in harmony and peace forevermore Frank F. Combs

Support Track \& Field
Dear Editor,
I'm sure most people who live in Union County or subscribe to our paper know what a
great school system we have. We have a high graduation rate as well as a high number of our
graduates going on to higher education We have graduates going on to higher education. We have
so many fun sports to watch on our home turf but one sport is impossible for parents and fans to watch unless we go out of town.
We have unbelievable
We have unbelievable talent in track and
field events, yet we have nowhere for compefeld events, yet we have nowhere for compe-
tition events. Our old asphalt track is from the 70 and cannot be used now. These kids work hard and compete at state level. I am so proud of every one of them and find it impossible to be-
lieve that Union County will not allocate funds to support them.
I believe we can do better. I believe our taxes can be used better. Our kids, Our future.

## North Georgia News

## Published since $1909 \cdot$ Legal Organ of Union County

$\begin{array}{ccccc}\begin{array}{c}\text { Kenneth West } \\ \text { Pubbisher/Owner }\end{array} & \begin{array}{c}\text { Shawn Jarrard } \\ \text { General Manager/Editor }\end{array} & \begin{array}{c}\text { Derek Richards } \\ \text { Advertising Director }\end{array} & \begin{array}{c}\text { Todd Forrest } \\ \text { Sports }\end{array} & \begin{array}{c}\text { Lowell Nicholson } \\ \text { Photographer }\end{array}\end{array}$ Website: www.nganews.com • Email: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com • Mail: P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514


Traveling through Owl Town, if you have on Forest Service property where you will almost stumble upon the remnants of an old fort.

## Chamber of Commerce

What a great week! I hope you all had
a chance to spend time with your family and friends and had plenty to eat I would like to thank all those that participated in the BBQ
Cook-Off earlier in the year. Thanks to you and the First Baptist Church Feed the Hungry
 Trees at the Union County Community Center
There There are over 50 trees and wreaths that have
been decorated by our local businesses, and been decorated by our local businesses, and
boy do we have some talented people. These trees get bigger and better each year, and this
year is Center and vote for your favorite, and while you a!e there, check out the Gingerbread
lage! This Saturday is also Breakfast with
Santa sponsored by UCBI, Chick-fil-A, the Shamber and the Post Office. Be sure to bring

## Organic, Hybrid, Heirloom

 A couple of weeks ago I wrote an articleon GMOs. This week I'm going to talk about a few more groupings that we make. I want to tal about what these names really mean, or don'
mean, so that you can make educated decisions when shopping, or selecting what you're go

 go through a lengthy certification process. You must be able to prove that your product was made without a long list of synthetic products.
To call something $100 \%$ Organic that product must have $100 \%$ organic ingredients. To call it Organic, it must contain a minimum of 95\%
organic ingredients. To say that something is organic ingredients. To say that something is
Made with Organic, it must have at least $70 \%$ of its ingredients organic. A product that says it
contains Organic Ingredients does not requir contains Organic Ingredients does not require certification. The USDA has a lot of regulations
about the word organic, and becoming certified about the word organic, and becoming certified organic is not an easy process. Even once you
are certified, you must pass periodic inspections to remain certified. Because of this, many prod ucts will use the terminology naturally grown, sustainable, locally grown, or other phrases
Usually these words have a lot less regulation and certification required to use them. The term hybrid is used to describe seeds.
Hybrid seeds are a cross between two parents Hybrid seeds are a cross between two parent
with desirable traits to create an offspring that with desirable traits to create an offspring that
has the best of both sides. Those desirable traits could be flavor, disease or insect resistance yield increase, color, or any number of other
things. Hybrids have oreat uniformity meaning things. Hybrids have great uniformity, meaning that as they grow that hybrid looks the same,
and will come ready to harvest at the same time. and will come ready to harvest at the same time
Hybrids can be organic. They can be GMO Most hybrids are conventionally bred, meaning
they are not genetically engineered. Hybrids they are not genetically engineered. Hybrid
are a great option for your garden, because the are a great option for your garden, because they
come with so many benefits. The drawback to hybrids is that if you save the seed from them, they won't grow into plants that look like the preme hybrid year after year, you have to buy th same hybrid year after year, you have to buy the
seed. Hybrids started to become more popular in the 1950s. Before hybrids, everyone planted heirlooms.
Heirl

Heirlooms don't have a strict definition. Typically, people think heirlooms are plant va
rieties that have been around for a long time However, his is not always the case. Heirloom are open-pollinators. This means that you will
$\qquad$

## Paris... continued from Page 4A

of maintaining lake levels at or near full pool for boating and
other recreation. if the rainfall levels are low, lake levels typically fluctuate a web site (TVA.com) and an app for your phone so you can keep up with lake levels and it they try to maintain assuming normal amounts of rainfall. For Lake Nottley daily water dents can visit: https://www tva.com/environment//akelevels/nottely.
Q. What are normal
levels on Nottely Lake? lake levels on Nottely Lake?
A.According to the TVA de, the lake is at the lowest levels in the winter. For example, on February 11, 2021 for the 2020/2021 Winter season at 1760.28 feet above sea level. Generally, it begins to
rise in the later part of March rise in the later part of March by the middle of May. In an-
other example, the lake hit
its highest level for 2021 on May 5 , at 1777.84 feet above sea level. The difference be
tween the Winter 2021 low tween the Winter 2021 low
and Summer 2021 high is just over 17 feet for Lake Nottely It remains at that general level until August or September if
there is adequate rainfall. For comparison, Lake Chatuge saw a Winter 2020/2021 low of 1917.19 feet above sea level and a Summer 2021 high of
1926.17 feet above sea level. The difference between the low and high in 2021 for Lake Chatuge is almost 9 feet. A he time of this writing, Lake
Nottely stands at 1761.25 above sea level. This data is shown on the TVA Operat More specifically the guide More specifically, the guid goals set by TVA. The guide can be found here: https:/t m/environment ing-Guide

Habitat... continued from Page 4A
by and browse the many trees
displayed by our local busidisplayed by
nesses, and
day Spirit!
You have probably heard that we are in the process of collecting applications
for our next Habitat House. Over the past month or so
we have held four orientation meetings, but if you missed hem, it's still not too late. you know of anyone who next Habitat House please encourage that person to call our office at 706-745-7101 and someone will fill them in on what it takes to become
a Habitat Homeowner. The deadline for applications time to apply!
foat in the Blairsville Christ mas Parade that starts at 6 p.in. on Dec. 4. Also, before the pa-
rade, there will be all sorts rade, there will be all sorts of as pictures with Santa Claus, he Lighting of the Christma Tree, Christmas Caroling, and several arts and crafts project
for kids. Habitat will have table there, so bring your kid dos and they can make some Christmas ornaments to tak mas trees. about volunteering with us We can always use the help middle of building a house we always need volunteers help do things like paint, build

## Williams.

continued from Page 4A have a lot more variability i what the plant looks like. The also will usually have less in-
sect or disease resistance tha difficult to making them mon help to preserve genetic diversity and connect us to the past, because the seeds carry th before have planted.
If you have question about seeds or gardening con-
tact your County Extensio Cact your County Extensio williams@uga.edu.

## Fowler.

continued from Page 4A
Well-meaning people of
heist or cultural religion an atheist or cultural religio and good will of Christma for now. Just be aware tha the truth behind the trappings
beckons you to consider who Jesus is, and to believe in Him as the living God, the God of miracles! Everything may look different
morning, per Olasky.
The lyrics of the song "Jesus Saves" (Cottrell and Moffitt) include, "Day breaking, night is quaking Jesus saves!" That is Olasky darkness-to-light story. H writes, "It's forty-five year later, and my gratitude to Go
keeps growing. To God be the eeps , ,orowing. To your story,这

## Eckman...

continued from Page 4A with and arrest drug users speeders, and more lawless
ness every day. Maybe it w poor planning or only having
one commissioner. Whateve the reason. I guess this is wh people want. My heart break as I watch the new suburb of Atlanta taking shap
George Eckman

## Dyer...

continued from Page 4A
The EOC is the coordination and information center for the incident or disaster. The clas was useful and there we back to our EMA.
Union County EM was happy to attend thes classes. We are always trying order to better prepare and serve our community. Al though EMA may not be on he forefront of everyone mind, Union County can res and constantly improving Union County Fire Depart ment ~Our Family Protec
ing Your Family~

## Chamber.

## continued from Page 4A

the kids and the kids-at-hea by to see Santa and play some Reindeer games. And check out the Chamber website f own this week. You don want to miss them. Happy Holiday and
decks, lay flooring, do con struction cleanup, and insta landscaping, just to name few things. However, we need Our ReStore is open six days week, and we would love to have you stop by when you can and help our staff orga-
nize merchandise price items and help customers. We also have a project called "Helping Hands" where we do repairs for homeowners so they can
stay in their houses - and we are always looking for volunteers for that.
There
There are also many
small
projects and events small projects and events
that we take on, not only to raise money, but also to raise awareness of our mission. We would love to have your help, whet a once-in-a-while thing, or a "one-time" thing... if you have the time, we have
the project! Call us at the project! Call us at 706-
$745-7101$ or just stop by to see what we have going on, and how you can help.

