

Memorials

I hear so much about Confederate soldiers being treasonous men, well, frankly, I just had to say something about that.

My Great-Grandfather was a sergeant in the 52 Infantry, Company C, Army of Tennessee.

Most folks just called him W.R. Duncan, that's how he wrote his name out on the Church Rolls at Coosa United Methodist Church.

W.R. lived into his 90s, (he died in 1904) and well, not a day went by after the Civil War that he didn't remember those days, and as well he should.

He was one of 120 men from Union County that enlisted to fight in that war. He was a brave man, and he spent the last year of that war in a Union Prison Camp, having been captured at the Battle of Atlanta.

President Trump may not have liked him, because he was captured on the battlefield. He undoubtedly would not have considered him a hero, because he had been captured.

I considered him a hero because he fought for his beliefs. He fought for States Rights, though many may argue that that war was all about slavery.

Another reason those brave men fought, the Home Guard would have killed them and unleashed brutality on their family members had they not fought for the South.

Today, the politically correct want to punish the statues and markers erected to memorialize the men who put their lives on the line at a time when this country was divided against itself.

The sins of slavery haunts this nation today, and, yes, a great sin it was. It continues to haunt us at every bend in the road. However, if these statues are removed, all that will be removed will be the memory of the time our nation was torn apart.

If the statues are removed, the memory of slavery will continue to linger in our society - the Racial Divide will not be cured.

See Duncan, page 5A

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



The News

Looking for reliable national and world news these days is like trying to buy meat in a third world country.

It's nothing new. Benjamin Franklin was a publisher, and he had to deal with this. From his autobiography of the late 1700s: "In the conduct of my newspaper, I carefully excluded all libel and personal abuse, which is of late years become so disgraceful to our country."

When I was a child, our family watched the evening news on TV and subscribed to the local paper. It's amazing that we survived without 24-hour cable news and internet!

You can either be off-balance and off-focus, or you can embrace "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute,

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. How is the economy of Union County?

A - We continue to be blessed. Our building permits for the first seven months of the year have been strong with the number of permits issued remaining steady.

In January we issued 14, February 10, March 20, April 16, May 18, June 15, and July had 10. Of these 94 homes, 16 were Spec homes and 78 were contract homes.

Annually, the totals for building permits issued are: 2014 - 87 homes built, 2015 - 129 homes built, 2016 - 154 homes built.

Our sales tax revenue (SPLOST collections) have also been steadily increasing. This allows us to be able to do so much more for the community. We recently completed a playground in Suches.

Sales Tax (SPLOST) receipts for the first six months of 2017 as compared to 2016 are below:

- January thru June 2016 - \$1,528,956, January thru June 2017 - \$1,604,886. Unemployment Rate June - 2014 - 6.1 percent, Unemployment Rate June - 2015 - 5.3 percent, Unemployment Rate June - 2016 - 4.9 percent, Unemployment Rate June - 2017 4.3 percent

Q. When will we receive our property tax bills this year?

A. According to the Tax Commissioner's office, property tax bills should be in the mail right after Labor Day, the first week in September.

Q. Will our property taxes be going up this year?

A. Not for most people. The only property tax increases would be if your property tax assessment was increased because of an improvement to your property or if your property was reassessed.

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Is THC addictive?

It can be. Dependence from excessive use of marijuana can show up in both physical and psychological symptoms, according to a team of Columbia University health promotion specialists and health care providers.

In fact, there is a 9 percent chance that a user will become dependent on marijuana at some point in their lifetime. This makes it less likely that marijuana use would cause dependence when compared to most other drugs.

The risk of dependence increases though, with the frequency of use, the amount of THC ingested (concentration), and other factors like age and genetics.

While the nature of dependence on marijuana is still being studied, long-term marijuana use appears to affect the brain in ways that are like other addictive substances.

See Coalition, page 5A

The mission of the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition is to support an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.



"Hey, they're already chasing me!"

Solar Eclipse

I just wanted to take a little time in this week's article to thank everyone in the community for your support during the weeks leading up to the Solar Eclipse and the day of the event.

We received a lot of questions during that period about what to expect and never having been through it before, we made our best estimations.

I don't know that any of us fully understood why people travelled from all over the world until we experienced it ourselves; now we get it. The day of the eclipse, I was texting my brothers and sisters in Virginia and Maryland sharing the experience with them.

We did hear about the huge cloud that... See Allison, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber

Regina Allison



Letters to the Editor

EPA seeks a step backward

Dear Editor, Since President Trump issued an executive order calling for the repeal and replacement of the 2015 Clean Water, or Water of the U.S. (WOTUS) Rule, my husband has discussed the issue with - and heard the concerns of - his fellow farmers.

The rule clearly defines which water bodies are protected by the Clean Water Act, eliminating the need for a costly and time-consuming case-by-case evaluation.

The Clean Water Rule does not infringe upon property rights or regulate land use. Practices such as the discharge of agricultural stormwater or return flow from irrigated agriculture do not require additional permitting

See Rasmussen, page 5A

Signs and Wonders

Dear Editor, I pray that everyone survived the eclipse of Aug. 21 and that all eyes were protected and no damage done and that everyone was in awe of God's miracle.

There have been many eclipses throughout history and each one of them shows us the unlimited power of God's amazing ability. But with every eclipse there comes a warning that God is trying to tell us something, perhaps a sign of our disobedience to Him; not repenting of our sins and that we need to heed God's awesome signs to get right with Him, before it's too late.

See Combs, page 5A

In His Peace And Mercy

Dear Editor, With all the horrors that are in our country right now, the courage of our police, sheriff and Georgia State Patrol, both men and women, are to be commended.

Our firefighters, both men and women, and EMT teams lay down their lives for strangers - that must be applauded.

Let us, whenever we see them or their vehicles, offer a simple blessing and prayer for courage and protection on them.

Thank you men and women of service in Union County. May the Lord Bless and protect you from all harm and bestow on you the wisdom you need.

Elizabeth Uhle

Thank You

The Great American Eclipse came and went...and it went well. That is how we at the Union County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and other public safety organizations are characterizing the event.

That does not mean that it was not busy. We had a significant increase in call volume every day but those calls were handled. We had several more medical calls than normal and a few major automobile accidents with significant injuries; some requiring transport by helicopter.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was opened the day of the eclipse to coordinate communications and responses. The EOC staff was in contact with all of the various public safety agencies and volunteers throughout the county and region.

There were federal, state, and local resources available to respond to any emergency. Some of the resources were paid staff but there were many people who volunteered.

The EMA would like to thank them all for their dedication and hard work during the event. It was estimated that there was an influx of 10,000 to 15,000 people. Most of the numbers are estimates but there were some reliable reports of significant numbers of people in areas throughout the county.

Overall, the people of Union County and all the visitors should be thanked for the way in which they handled the increase in the number of people and traffic.

Thank you for making our job easier. It makes us proud to live in such a great community.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Willie the Billy

My granny, Glenna Mae Cummings, was quite the horse trader. She didn't trade horses, but, she traded other things. She was good at trading with the local peddler for things needed around the home.

Granny could just look at a shoat (young feeder pig) and decide if it would yield adequate meat and lard when it was finished out at 260 pounds. She had an uncanny 6th sense that would tell her if a hog would get sick or remain healthy.

Granny and Papa were still living at the weaning off house next to Lon Cummings when they purchased the farm I grew to love as a little boy. Each day the young family would make the trip to the newly acquired property.

Granny thought she had got the best of the old peddler. Paul and Bud thought the old goat was... See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Black Walnuts

No doubt many of us are currently hearing the ominous "thuds" of black walnuts falling all around our "thuds" of yards. Though they may seem unsightly when they start to decompose in our yards and provide hazards for our lawn mowers, these nuts can provide a tasty reward to those persistent enough to crack them.

Black walnut trees are native to our region and have compound leaves, with many leaflets arranged on a main stem. These trees are also considered monoecious, meaning they have both male and female flowers on the same tree.

Walnuts will start to drop in late September, but we will see the height of harvest in mid-October to November. The nuts found inside the green and brown husk are highly prized, but processing these is not for the faint of heart!

It is important to hull, or remove the husk, walnuts because if the husk is left on while they are cured, walnuts will become discolored and have an odd flavor. The dye produced by walnut husks stains clothes, wood, and skin, so take appropriate precautions when hulling the nuts.

After you have hulled the walnuts, wash the unshelled nuts. The shells also stain, so wash them outside. A garden hose and a bucket do the trick just fine, and this also helps determine which nuts are good: if they sink, keep them, and if they float, throw them away as they likely... See Mattee, page 5A

From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



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Kenneth West Owner/Publisher, Charles Duncan Editor

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E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com

Mailing: P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

Derek Richards Advertising Director, Todd Forrest Staff Writer

Shawn Jarrard Staff Writer, Lily Avery Staff Writer

Lowell Nicholson Photographer

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Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 \* P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514