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to drive over there. As with the main Transfer Station there is no charge for disposing of recyclables.

### Q. Are recyclables still accepted at the Volunteer Fire Stations on Wednesday mornings?

A. Not all of the Volunteer Fire Stations do this. This is only offered at Station 2 on Jones Creek, Station 3 in Owl-town, Station 4 off of Ivylog, Station 5 in Suches, Station 8 on Gumlog, and Station 9 at the Coosa Precinct. This gives citizens an additional option

for disposing of their recyclable materials. Lots of people have their trash picked up by a company and these companies do not take separate recyclable materials. So, these citizens then have the option of just dropping off their recyclables at these locations to avoid going to the Transfer Station or the Convenience Center. These recycle locations are run by volunteers and if you are interested in volunteering on a Wednesday morning please contact our office at 706-439-6000.

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around the corner is our Business Lunch hosted by Strickland and Associates CPAs. If you're looking to gain understanding on the new tax law changes, mark your calendars to join us on February 13th from 12 – 1 PM at the Union County Community Center. Our featured speaker, Lisa Strickland, will touch on a few of the changes that may affect both Corporate or Individual returns. In this time of change, we are hoping to provide resources and programs that will allow members to stay current on the ever-changing rules and regulations that accompany not only operating a business but working for one as well.

2019 includes the return of the Local Eggs and Issues Breakfast on Tuesday, March 26th from 8-9 am at the Union

County Community Center. Mayor Conley and Commissioner Paris will be joining us to bring an update on current events in the City and County. The View Grill, Head Chef, Matt Leonard, will be cooking a delicious breakfast complete with omelets, sausage, and other breakfast favorites. Hopefully, we will learn some answers behind all the rumors of new businesses that may be coming to our community this year.

Please remember that shopping local helps our business community continue to grow and keeps our economy strong. If you would like to register to attend any of the events listed above or would like to see a list of all the happenings in our community, please go to visit-blairsvillega.com.

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

an entomology class. I felt as if I had found my calling. The study of insects came naturally to me and helped point me in the direction of my career.

My wife and I had been married a little more than 2 years when we found the opportunity to move back to North Georgia. No offense to those from the flat lands, but, there is something about watching a sunrise over a mountain. Especially if that mountain is covered in Oak Trees. When we moved we were able to find a 12 x 30 trailer on Sand Mountain. It was located on a lot under some big Chestnut Oaks. We moved into the place in August. Late September meant the large acorns from those trees began to fall and there were many nights I was awakened by what sounded like a shotgun blast when actually it was another acorn. I came to love those old trees and now when I hear an acorn fall I think of the pleasant memories we have from that time.

When I was 10 I received my first shotgun. It was a Lever action .410 gauge. The lever actually broke down the breech so a shell could be extracted or loaded into the gun. It was only meant for small game and I was able to take many a squirrel with that gun. When my boys came along and decided to participate on the 4-H Shotgun Team we purchased two shotguns. When practice began I found myself smelling something familiar. The smell from those shells reminded me of the days I wandered across our family farm hunting squirrels in North Alabama and Georgia. Now when I go to the skeet range a familiar aroma takes me back to the days when my boys were still around shooting skeet and even further back I can see a little boy with his Daddy and Papa wandering the hills and ridges of home.

I also enjoy any waterfall and this year is a year in which they are most enjoyable. There are many across our area that are unknown to most people. I simply enjoy going to the woods in search of ones I have never

observed. Just the area between Turner's Corner and Neel's Gap contains close to 15 of them. You must get off the beaten path to find some of them. One of my favorites is no more than 200 yards off the highway. I enjoy climbing up toward the base and finding a place to sit and watch the water cascade down the rock face. There is something very soothing about watching a waterfall makes. It will wash your troubles away.

Another sound I enjoy is that of the wind in a gap. The sound can be soothing if the wind is gentle. However, if a cold front is coming through and the wind is howling the sound can be invigorating if not downright scary. Sometime you should try climbing a mountain ridge into a gap when the wind is howling. You will never feel more alive. Every sense you have is heightened and rightfully so. Even the trees respect the wind at this altitude. However, if the wind is gentle your topping out into the gap can be very soothing and calming.

Let's end with my thoughts about Hemlock Trees. I love them for many reasons. You can stay dry under them in a rain as long as the rain is not a storm or prolonged. Also, you can easily find dead twigs of hemlocks with which you can start a campfire. The leaves of the tree are a good source of protection for small birds from the elements during storm events. During the winter these trees can be magnificent in their appearance. As you know there isn't much greenery this time of year. So, when you find a big one it can dominate the area in which you are viewing. This tree gives me hope that a green spring is not very far away. A few years ago Harold Dyer and I found a huge Hemlock in Frogtown Cove. I measured the tree and found it to be close to 49 inches in diameter. The estimated age of this tree is approximately 650 years old. That tree was here 123 years before Columbus landed in North America. I would say it is a treasure. Wouldn't you?

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members to petition a state court to order the temporary removal of firearms from a person who may present a danger to others or to him- or herself. A judge makes the determination to issue the order based on statements and actions made by the gun owner in question. After a set time, the guns are returned to the person from whom they were seized unless another court hearing extends the period of confiscation.

Such orders are known as "Extreme Risk Protection Orders" (ERPO) in Oregon, Washington, Maryland and Vermont; as "Risk Protection Orders" in Florida; as "Gun Violence Restraining Orders" in California; as "Risk Warrants" in Connecticut;

cut; and as "Proceedings for the Seizure and Retention of a Firearm" in Indiana.

Home visits to "look in on" at-risk families casually coupled with "Red-Flag" laws: Is there the occasion there for government accusation, overreach, intrusion...? These days, it appears as though suspicion and accusation are taking the place of judicious confirmation and adjudication. "The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help.'" - Ronald Reagan

I remember my Dad warning me: The road to Hell is paved with good intentions.

*Die Wände haben Ohren.*  
**George A. Mitchell**

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of extraordinary efforts by our governments to save the snail darter, have roped off areas and nests to protect the owls and their eggs, as well as saving the turtles and their young on beaches and inland as well. In fact, harming them is a criminal offense which can be prosecuted.

But today, we see we can kill children as they are born with the full knowledge and participation of the mother and their doctor! This is a screwed world we live in.

**Ed Werder**

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possibly benefit the high flyers, but raising the monthly flat fee harms those most in need.

Have you seen the lines at Feed the Hungry and other food banks around town? \$40 a month flat fee for no electric is almost \$500 a year!

Please rethink your position. Also, you should know we are thankful to the way Blue Ridge Mountain Electric keeps our power running and is very responsive when the need to restore it arises.

**Roger Rashid**

## Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

The Truth About Marijuana, Mental Illness, and Violence."

Some 65 percent of Americans favor legalization. This huge shift in public attitudes comes even though most Americans do not use the drug. Only 15 percent of people over 12 used it even once in 2017, according to a large federal survey issued by SAMHSA released in September 2018. That year, only three million people tried it for the first time.

Instead, the change has been largely driven by decades-long lobbying by marijuana legalization advocates and for-profit cannabis companies.

Meanwhile, legalization advocates have squelched discussion of the serious mental health risks of marijuana and THC, the chemical responsible for the drug's psychoactive effects. Anyone who raises those concerns may be mocked as a modern-day believer in "Reefer Madness," the notorious 1936 movie that portrays young people descending into insanity and violence after smoking marijuana.

With large studies in peer-reviewed journals showing that marijuana increases the risk of psychosis and schizophrenia, the scientific literature around the drug is far more negative than it was 20 years ago. Comparing two major reports from the National Academy of Medicine, the nonprofit group that advises the federal government on health and medicine, makes the difference clear.

In a report in 1999, the

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Here's the point. Neither your past life nor your age can keep you from the love and invitation of God. "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). It's humbling, for sure, to admit you were wrong, but when it comes to eternity you have everything to gain. Once that is settled, by faith you enjoy the contentment and purpose that comes with your re-ordered life.

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several structure fires in the last couple of weeks, so we have been able to use some of the knowledge and skills learned in this training. The training facility is the best training tool to teach firefighters how to fight these types of fires. We are lucky to have the facility and extremely grateful to those who made it possible. Union County Fire Department ~ Our Family Protecting Your Family ~

## Williams... continued from Page 4A

Some plants are able to tolerate cold weather while others can't. Scientist believe the ability to tolerate cold weather comes down to the makeup of the cell membranes in the plant. Cell membranes are made up of fat molecules. Some of them are saturated and some unsaturated. Similar to what you read on the nutrition facts label for packaged food. Scientists think that plants with a higher ratio of saturated fats can freeze more easily.

Winter can seem like a dead time of the year, really it means that new life is just around the corner. If you have any more questions about the effect of winter on plants contact your local Extension Office or send me and email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

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likeness which we will inherit in the next life to come. Yes, you heard me right. This sinful place we dwell in is but a testing ground of one's faith and trust in a God who cannot fail. His promises are as true today as they were back when a brand new sinless child called Jesus was born on Christmas day. Eternity is a place of everlasting beauty, grace and love that anyone can claim as their own future home. There's only one catch, you must believe upon the Name of Jesus Christ with all of your heart and follow Him as a brand new believer and come and live with Him in heaven. All things do become brand new in Christ, Jesus.

**Frank F. Combs**

## Humane Society's Board meeting

The Humane Society's Mountain Shelter Board of Directors will meet at the Blairsville Thrift Store at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, February 19.

aggravated assaults since 2014, according to reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Police reports and news articles show a clear link to cannabis in many cases.

As Americans consider making marijuana a legal drug, it would be wise to remember the choices that fueled the devastating opioid epidemic. Decades ago, many of the same people pressing for marijuana

legalization argued that the risks of opioid addiction could be easily managed.

A half-million deaths later, we have learned how wrong they were. Marijuana's risks are different from opioids, but they are no less real. Sadly, denial and tax dollars seem to be of more interest to advocates and the states, while law enforcement will be left to deal with the wreckage.