

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### Prescribed Burning

Warmer days are here which means time for yard work. This usually involves getting up the last bit of leaves and other yard debris and disposing of it, usually by burning. It is also the time of year that we see many prescribed burns conducted by private landowners as well as the various forestry services. Prescribed burning is a common occurrence in our area. Here are a few things that we would like for everyone to keep in mind about prescribed burns and outdoor burning.

Prescribed burns, otherwise known as controlled burns, are burns that are intentionally set in a controlled setting where the fire can be managed. They are conducted by fire management professionals from organizations such as the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS). Some private landowners may also conduct control burns once they obtain a permit. Most of these burns are used for wildfire management which includes reducing fuel loads (leaves and dead trees) to reduce the hazards of out-of-control wildfires.

Many people do not know the great deal of planning and preparation that is involved in prescribed burns. Organizations who conduct these control burns must factor in many variables such as safety, location, terrain, fuel load, fuel characteristics, weather, smoke dispersion, resources needed to manage and contain the fire, and many more. There is also the cooperation and notification of the various other organizations that may be involved. There is a great deal of thought, planning, and preparation involved in conducting a safe and effective prescribed burn.

One result of these prescribed burns is the smoke. These prescribed burns can produce large amounts of smoke that can travel for miles and settle throughout our area. We receive many phone calls about smoke in the area and even 911 calls to investigate. Responding to complaints of "smoke in the area" ties up resources and can increase response times to other emergencies.

Smoke in a given area does not necessarily mean you should call 911. It may be smoke from a controlled burn or a forestry prescribed burn. However, if there are any indications of an out-of-control fire, 911 should be called. Indications of an out-of-control

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**Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief**  
*David Dyer*



### The Narrow Way

I have a Georgia Peach Pass. That means I can exit the buspy freeway through the toll gate and use the single lane that skips past the notorious Atlanta congestion. I might feel a little survivor's guilt when I see the hapless souls stuck with the trucks, going nowhere.

It reminds me of something Jesus said. "The gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matt. 7:14). It's not the small gate and narrow way that alarms me. It's the "few who find it" part. He also said, "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able" (Luke 13:24). He went on to describe people who were knocking on a door claiming with futility the head of the house should know them.

Why is the portal to the truest expression of human life, living in communion with God, hard to find? Part of the answer is God's common grace. You experience the beauty of creation, the love of family and friends, or success in your endeavors and things seem right with the universe. If life is good, you can fail to realize that you still need to be reconciled to God.

In "Screwtape Letters," C. S. Lewis imagines comments by a devilish tempter whose enemy is God. Screwtape says, "The only thing that matters is the extent to which you separate the man from the Enemy. It does not matter how small the sins are provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light...Indeed, the safest road to Hell is the gradual one - the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts." Indeed, the wide gate and broad road represent the comfortable, autonomous way of life. That's alarming.

But all is not lost. Once, people asked Jesus, "Who can be saved?" He responded, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). God has made a way when there seems to be no way. To be specific, Jesus said, "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved" (John 10:9). He is the small door. He said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John

See Fowler, page 5A

**All Things New**  
*Wayne Fowler*



### Commissioner's Questions

**Q. We will be really excited to have the Farmers Market open this year. What is the date of opening?**

A. An unofficial opening is held each year with the Ramp Day kickoff currently scheduled for May 1. The Farmers Market is officially scheduled to open on June 5 of this year. The hours will be 7am to 1pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 5pm on Tuesdays. We are looking forward to another busy season this year with many return vendors and some new additions also. For more information you can visit the website at [www.ucfarmers-market.com](http://www.ucfarmers-market.com) or you can call 706-439-6043.

**Q. When does Trash & Treasure begin at the Farmers Market?**

A. The Union County Farmers Market staff continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation. Last year we were unable to host this due to Covid-19 guidelines. However, at this time, the plan is to try to open the Trash & Treasure Yard Sale by the end of June with COVID-19 Policies in place similar to the Farmers Market policies. Please check the website the last week of May for an update/opening date.

**Q. I grow produce locally, how do I reserve a booth at the Farmers Market?**

A. Applications for the 2021 season are now available online at: <http://www.unioncountygga.gov/farmers-market/applications/> Space is at a premium, and the booth rentals fill quickly. If you are interested in reserving a booth at the Farmers Market, you will want to get your application in early.

**Q. Large white utility trucks are parked in the Farmers Market parking area. Who owns these and why are they parked on that property?**

A. Union County and North Georgia Technical College have partnered to help create a safe and effective area for a specific kind of technical training. Stay tuned to the North Georgia News for more information when we introduce this training partnership to our residents.

**Q. When driving through the Farmers Market this weekend, I saw some chain-link fencing and people walking dogs. The sign stated "Farmers Market." Exactly what is this**

See Paris, page 5A

**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**  
*Lamar Paris*



### Military Musings

#### Happy Birthday American Legion

March 15th of this year marks the 101st birthday of the American Legion. As Hee Haw (am I dating myself here?) would say, "SA-LUTE!" The Legion, organized in 1919, was originally known as the American Expeditionary Force, organized and meeting for the first time in Paris, France. Now known as the American Legion, it lays claim to being the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization (VSO).

As with many service organizations, the Legion is governed by a set of founding documents, a constitution and bylaws. The preamble defines the purpose for existence of the Legion with 10 points, the first three and foremost: to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States; maintain law and order; and perpetuate 100% Americanism.

The Legion, chartered by Congress,

See Walters-Taylor, page 5A

**Military Musings**  
*Janice Walters-Taylor*



### Chamber of Commerce

Have you seen the daffodils off the square? They are the perfect backdrop to this beautiful spring weather we're experiencing. With our next Mass Vaccine Clinic scheduled for this Wednesday, we're anticipating a continued downturn in COVID numbers, and we're hopeful for a continued upturn in our local economy as well. There are a lot of exciting things happening locally including the upcoming Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In at the end of July. Look for our brand new Community Guide, a beautiful coffee-table style tour of all things Blairsville-Union County. One local landmark, our Farmers Market, has continued to expand. Have you been out to the Farmers Market? A quiet spot with agility equipment, a fenced in area for dogs to run, and a nice walking trail along Butternut Creek, this addition to the market makes both man and pooch happy. We're anticipating the Farmers Market Ramp Festival the first of May, and of course we can already

**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**  
*Steve Rowe*



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### Letters to the Editor

#### A Better Way

Dear Editor,

I am 84-years-old and tested positive for COVID Feb. 24; I have had a serious illness with the disease. I had my second COVID-19 vaccination on Feb. 11 and was part of a large group at the new athletic gym. Georgia Public Health had the brilliant idea to serve more people at one time.

You went to three different tables and then waited to get your shot. Afterward, you waited for 15 minutes before you could leave. During all this time, there was a rather large number of people milling around, going and coming, people of all ages. The workers were very pleasant and efficient dealing with this number of people.

See Ballard, page 5A

#### Affordable Housing

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the article titled "HayeCo uses 'SIPs' to build affordable homes," which was published in the March 3, 2021 edition of the North Georgia News. I appreciate both the technical challenge to build modular homes and the willingness to step out to provide affordable homes in Union County on the part of Isaac and Jordan Hayes.

I am pleased that you saw fit to present this information to the citizens of Union County and did it with your usual succinct and clear presentation.

John Andrews

#### Bigger Problems

Dear Editor,

I agree with the March 10 letter entitled "Practicing Tolerance," which addresses the ongoing "disjointed ramblings" of a frequent letter writer about President Trump, Republicans, the South, and all our collective supposed racism and bigotry.

So, on the same page, I see yet another letter from this aggrieved person.

I grow weary of leftists trying to rewrite history and events years later. If someone wants to ride with flags in their cars or trucks, why do you have to resort to calling them names or assigning bigotry or racism to them? If it offends you, look away! I am offended by many things - most of all leftists and their godless ideology - but I do not have to go around calling people names and stirring up trouble, insulting others every week in the lovely hometown paper.

Also, please do not use a psychological term like cognitive dissonance when you do not

See Lausier, page 5A

### Spring Home Assessment

#### Firewise USA® Program Spring Home Assessment

Happy March - seems like March got here quicker than it used to, what happened to February? I guess time flies more because we pack so much into the weeks that time just flies by.

I try to make every day count because each one is one less than we had! I wanted to reach out and share a couple of new resources from the Firewise USA® program with you.

These tools will help those of you assess the wildfire risk in your community without outside help. You can use this tutorial at your leisure and take as long as you like. There will not be a test at the end so enjoy and see where your community risk level is.

If it needs improving, we can help so do not hesitate to call on us, Chest-Chatt RC&D the Georgia Firewise Liaison or the local Georgia Forestry Commission office in your county. The GFC is there to help communities with home and community assessments. An assessment is simply where the GFC Ranger walks around your home with you and they point out hazards raise the risk of wildfire on your property.

The GFC Rangers will only come to your house with you there and after you invite them to come. The assessments are for your information only and are simply suggestions for actions you can take to help you make your house and community safer from a wildfire.

They do not share the information with anyone and its FREE. You do not even have to do what they suggest because there is no audit or test, but if your house burns or is damaged by wildfire, do not say they did not warn you! A wildfire does not have to be a spectacular, long-time event but can be as simple as a leaf fire next door or in your yard that got out of hand and spread by a puff of wind to your unprotected house.

If you are home, you can put it out quickly, but what if you are at work or out of town and it comes creeping across your yard and if you have not taken steps to remove the fuel around your home, then you could be in for a surprise when you get home.

If you have done your Firewise work in the defensible space, then the flames will go out or go searching for fuel at some unprotected place if not it could climb your walls looking for a crack or crevice to get into your house where there is a lot of dry fuel. Fire is hungry

See Riley, page 5A

**RC&D Executive Director**  
*Frank Riley*



### The Relationship

The relationship of my parents must have begun sometime around 1955 and has now lasted for more than 63 years. Don't get me wrong, there have been tough times both economically and health related. However, these two people have taken life's blows and are still together even though life has not always been kind. And it all began with one little bet.

A group of athletes was gathered together in the gymnasium at Phil Campbell High School in the late fall of 1955. Rod was one of the most popular boys in school. All the girls wanted to date him, and he was the point guard on the basketball team as well as shortstop on the baseball team. At least he was until Paul moved back home from up north. The boys were all in the gymnasium to sign up for the upcoming basketball tryouts. When the boys signed their name on the dotted line, they also had to list their position. When Paul signed his name, he listed his position as point guard.

A boy behind him noticed he had listed point guard beside his name, and he whispered that Rod played point and always had. He told my father, "There was no way you can take the job from him." As Paul stood with the other boys, Rod began to brag about a girl he wanted to date. He told the crowd there was no way she would go out with anyone but him. Dad said he thought he could get the girl to go out with him. So, the popular young man bet the newcomer \$10 that Shirley Adams would not go out on a date with anyone else before she went out with him. In 1955, \$10 was a lot of money, so the bet was on!

Later that evening Paul went to the farm of Bill Adams. Bill and Delphia had two chicken houses containing a total of 10,000 broilers. The young man walked through the door of the chicken house and found Shirley's Dad feeding his flock of birds. So, he set in to helping the man. He placed fresh water for the chickens and picked up the dead ones. He also grabbed a eat and placed feed in the troughs for them to eat. After all the work was finished, Pawpaw Adams looked at the young man and exclaimed with a smile, "I have never found a man to do this much work without wanting something. What do you want, young man?" The young man replied, "Mr. Adams, I would like to take your daughter to a movie at the Roxie theater in Russellville."

First, Pawpaw asked about the identity of his parents. Paul told him that his father was Cooon Cummings and his mother was Glenna Mae. He also told him that his grandfathers were Lon Cummings and Clifford Hyde. Then her

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**Around The Farm**  
*Mickey Cummings*



### Cicada

I'm sure that by now a lot of people have heard about the cicadas that are due to emerge this year. Because this will be a once 17 years type of event, I wanted to talk about it. Let's talk about what they look like, what they eat, and any other facts you might need to know about cicadas.

Adult cicadas are a winged insect that grows to be about 2.5 inches long. They sometimes get confused with locusts because people associate them both with coming in waves or plagues. Cicadas are not nearly as destructive as locusts. Their bodies are black with some orange stripes down the wings.

Cicadas are divided into different broods. The brood coming out this year is brood X (10). Some broods are on a 13-year cycle, and the brood like what we're this year every 17 years. 12 broods that emerge every 17 years and 3 broods emerge every 13 years. Brood X is one of the most widespread as there will be appearances from the east coast to the Mississippi River and from New York down to Georgia.

We get cicadas every year, as there are also annual cicadas that emerge. These annual cicadas actually live 2-5 years, so they are annual in the sense that they reappear annually. This brood of cicadas is projected to have as many as 1.5 million cicadas per acre. That brings the total population to the trillions. These cicadas even though they only emerge for a few weeks have been living underneath us for the past 17 years. Scientists don't know why 17 is the magic number. The cicadas will even wait a couple of days together if the weather is rainy. Underground they feed on tree roots. The damage that they cause is minimal. Once they are emerged, the damage that they do to plants is mostly cosmetic. I do not recommend spraying any pesticides for them. There will be so many of them that it will be impossible to control them with the use of pesticides. Their mouthpart is a piercing-sucking one. It's designed like a straw so that they can slurp plant juices. This means that they can't really bite you, but they might stick you if you antagonize them.

The main issue with cicadas is going to be the amount of noise that they create. In groups, their sound can reach 100 decibels. This is the same as a jet flyover at 1,000 feet or a helicopter at 100 feet. The males trying to attract a female to mate create this noise. After mating, the female will lay her eggs inside the trees. If young trees are completely swarmed it can damage them. You can use a net to protect them. These eggs will hatch in 6-10 weeks. The nymphs fall to the

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**Watching and Working**  
*Jacob Williams*



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