

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## New Normal

The Governor of the State of Georgia has signed an executive order on April 20th to allow certain businesses to open who have previously been ordered to close. This is being referred to as "opening up." He followed up that executive order with another order on April 23rd that provided the guidelines for these businesses and extending other previous executive orders until May 13th. The businesses that are allowed to reopen must comply with certain restrictions and implement practices to reduce the exposure and spread of COVID-19. This can be very confusing and has raised a great deal of debate.

The "opening up" does not mean that we can throw caution to the wind or behave as if this is over. It is not over; this is our new normal for a while. The businesses that have chosen to open up must follow the restrictions and guidelines for the safety of employees and the customers. That is their responsibility. If anyone decides to go to these businesses, they must use common sense and practice all the precautions that have been taught over the last two months.

The new normal, for now at least, is practicing these precautions and preventive measures. This includes wearing a cloth mask. If you do not have a cloth mask by now, you are behind the times. People should get used to wearing a mask in public and get used to seeing others wearing them. The governor's executive order also "strongly encouraged" everyone to wear a mask when outside your home.

The mask is not only for your protection but for the protection of others. There is evidence that a person can be positive for COVID-19 and not be aware of it. They may have no signs and symptoms at all. They could also be spreading the virus without knowing it. This is why wearing a cloth mask in public is very important not only for your safety but for the safety of others.

According to the CDC, a cloth face covering or mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face; be secured with ties or ear loops; include multiple layers of fabric; allow for breathing without restriction; and be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape. The CDC has more information on how to make and use a cloth mask.

This is our new normal for now. As I have stated before, we

See Fire, page 5A

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



## Heaven Is Real

"Life is hard – but God is good, and heaven is real" – Billy Graham. Heaven is as real as life is hard.

Isn't it possible that God might allow eyewitnesses of heaven? Rev. Graham was at the bedside of the famed preacher, R. G. Lee, who was in and out of consciousness as he lay dying at his home in Memphis. In a moment of sudden awareness he looked at Rev. Graham and said, "I saw heaven. I saw Jesus. I saw my mother. I never did justice to heaven in my sermons." Rev. Graham said his own mother experienced a glimpse of heaven just before she died.

I was once alone in the hospital room with a dying man. But for the monitoring devices he appeared to be gone. Suddenly, he raised his hand and repeated in an awestruck voice, "Praise You Jesus!" He had seen something amazing. After a few respectful moments I asked what he saw, but he never acknowledged my presence.

These apparent eyewitness accounts are not without precedent. Stephen, just before he became the first Christian martyr, "gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55).

Someone once asked Rev. Graham if such an eyewitness experience could be real. He answered, "It's not a hallucination or chemical reaction in the brain (as some suggest). I am convinced it is instead a God-given glimpse into eternity. Through it, God is reminding those who are present—and us as well—that eternity is real, and Christ is waiting to welcome us into Heaven. He alone is our hope, because by His death on the cross He paid the price for our sins, and by His resurrection from the dead He conquered death and hell and Satan."

The Bible is certain about an afterlife. In what is probably the oldest book in the Bible, and after all of the woes he endured Job said, "After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God" (Job 19:26). The Psalmist declared, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psa. 23:6). Before he raised Lazarus back to life Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies" (John 11:25). Jesus made heaven the future home for those who believe.

See Fowler, page 5A

**All Things New**  
*Wayne Fowler*



## Commissioner's Questions

**Q. When the Governor issued his latest Executive Order on April 20th, what did it include?**

A. He drastically weakened his previous Executive Order that was issued on April 8th. First, he allowed Hospitals to resume performing elective surgeries. He removed his restrictions on gyms, fitness centers, bowling alleys, barber shops, body art studios, estheticians, nail care artists, hair designers, and massage therapists effective Friday, April 24, 2020. This means that these types of businesses will be able to reopen on April 24th. He is allowing movie theaters and restaurants (for dine in) to reopen on Monday, April 27th.

**Q. Are there any social distancing guidelines or sanitation guidelines for these businesses to follow once they reopen?**

A. Yes. All of these businesses must follow twenty specific guidelines outlined in the order. Some of these include screening employees for signs of illness, prohibiting handshaking, suspending the use of PIN entry devices, and increasing physical space between workers' worksites to 6 feet. The full list can be found at [www.unioncountyga.gov/id](http://www.unioncountyga.gov/id).

**Q. Why did the Governor reopen all of these businesses and activities when we are still in the middle of a pandemic?**

A. I am not totally sure. I think he has received pressure from businesses and health care alike, and in the end, he had to make a decision that he thinks best suits Georgia. We are all not going to agree, and only time will tell if he made the best choices or not. They are his choices to make, and we can only hope and pray that they are the best decisions for the majority of Georgians.

**Q. Are we still under a Shelter in Place Order?**

A. Yes, we are still under a Shelter in Place Order that does not expire until April 30th. However, with all the businesses reopening and with the removal of restrictions, it appears that it will not hold a lot of meaning.

**Q. Do you agree with the Governor in opening things up as soon as he has?**

A. I will only answer that by saying, that if I had been asked, I would respond that the best thing for the citizens of Union

See Paris, page 5A

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



## Drug Free Mountain Life

### Tips for Teens About Alcohol

For many parents, bringing up the subject of alcohol is no easy matter. To make the most of your conversation, take some time to think about the issues you want to discuss before you talk with your child.

Consider too how your child might react and ways you might respond to their questions and feelings.

You don't need to cover everything at once. In fact, you're likely to have a greater impact on your child's decisions about drinking by having a number of talks about alcohol use throughout his or her adolescence. Think of this talk with your child as the first part of an ongoing conversation.

And remember, do make it a conversation, not a lecture! You might begin by finding out what your child thinks about alcohol and drinking. Consider beginning the conversation by allowing your child to share their view on alcohol.

See Drug Free, page 5A

The DRUG FREE MOUNTAIN LIFE campaign supports an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families, and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.

## Letters to the Editor

### Masks & Appreciation

To the Editor,

Can you ask your readers to please not forget their local Cancer Centers or local physician offices when donating masks or showing their appreciation? We all wear different color capes and may not be affiliated with the hospitals they have donated to.

Thank you!  
Carlyn Richardson

### Trying Times

To the Editor,

We are experiencing difficult times in our nation and in our world as well, and one wonders, what is it all about? Could this be the end of the world that we read about in God's word when He tells us He is coming soon to gather His church folks out of here and take us home to heaven? Well, I am not sure about that; only God knows the time for this event to take place. But one has to ponder the reason for this virus getting out. Yes, God gives mankind free will to do what they want, and maybe this was a big mistake made by a Chinese laboratory that went wrong and it got out of the building into society. But we must remember, human beings ever since the beginning of time have messed up, time and time again, just like Adam did in the Garden of Eden when he disobeyed God's commands. And mankind has been making mistakes for a few thousand years and will continue to do so, till the

See Combs, page 5A

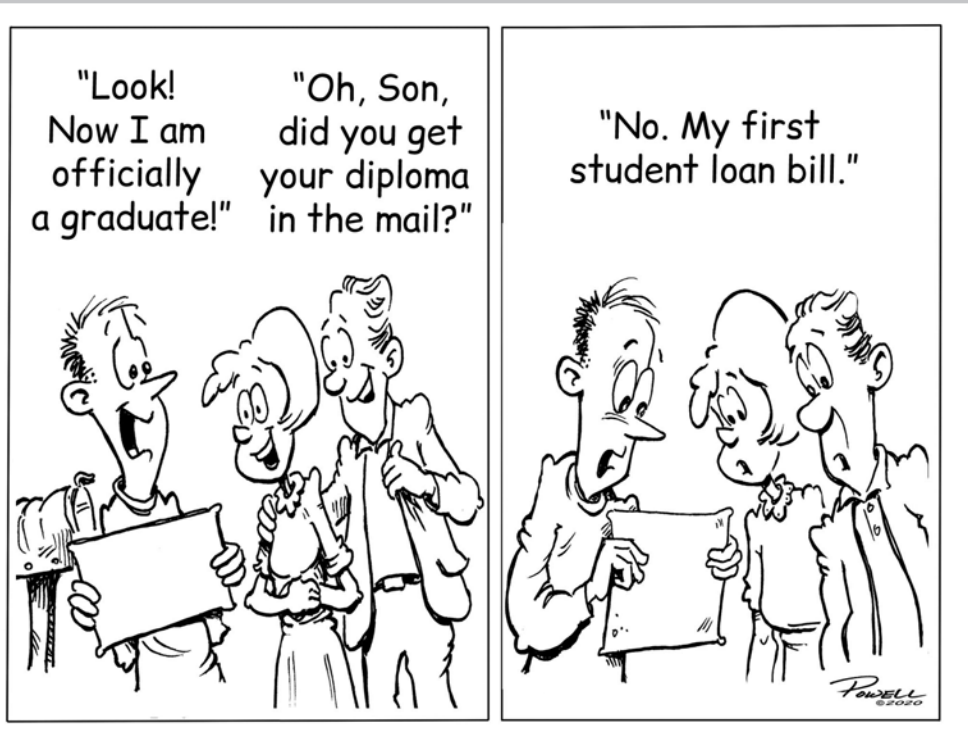
### Abnormally Fixated

To the Editor,

I find it interesting one of your readers is so abnormally fixated on the topic of climate change he has written a litany of letters to the editor about it. Considering there are scores of real evils plaguing this planet, including the current coronavirus, it seems this person would be better served to direct his attentions to some of those. He constantly harps about "science and reality." Perhaps he should take into consideration a little bit of history. The reality is that climate change has been with us since the creation of earth, alternating between extreme cold (ice age) and warmer periods. We are presently in one of those warmer periods called interglacial. That's the way God planned it. According to geologist Louis Agassiz and mathematician Milutin Milankovitch, variations in the Earth's orbit and shifting plate tectonics produce the changes in climate.

In his Jan. 8 letter, this writer states, "We now have a new year and a chance to really

See Meier, page 5A



## Community Preparedness

March and April are our spring wildfire months up here in North Georgia. Most of my articles are about wildfire preparedness in our communities and are intended to make you aware of the wildfire risks all around us and the small things that you can do to prevent one of these life changing events in your backyard. When conditions are right, it only takes one match or a small spark to start an out-of-control fire that cannot be stopped before it destroys things that cannot be replaced. The most dangerous months for wildfires up here in the mountains historically are November, March, and April, but we can't let our guard down the rest of the year because wildfires can happen at any time when the conditions are right.

Wildfire education is a never ending, year-round process. Join communities throughout the U.S. on Saturday, May 2, 2020 as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) launches its sixth national Wildfire Community Preparedness Day! This year we will have to do it virtual or with our family in our own backyard but that is something we can all do while we are sheltered in place.

Dedicate a couple of hours for risk reduction, or the entire day, and watch as your actions positively contribute to reducing your community's wildfire risk, one house at a time. NFPA created the annual Wildfire Community Preparedness Day campaign as a way to rally people around the cause of wildfire safety and to turn ideas into action that can make a difference. But, we're facing a global public health threat today, and we realize that COVID-19 may be preventing you from meeting to carry out your plans or to do the activities you would normally do together, now and on May 2.

NFPA and State Farm urge everyone not to feel pressured to have gatherings or events that may compromise public health at this time. In place of in-person events, NFPA and State Farm suggest conducting activities you can do from home and still help raise awareness of wildfire safety such as posting and sharing Facebook and Twitter messages and tips with others in your community, and engaging in yard work around your home.

Home activities include: Raking and removing pine needles and dry leaves within a minimum of 3 to 5 feet of a home's foundation. And if you have the time, continue raking up to a 30-foot distance around the home. Dispose of collected debris in appropriate trash receptacles. Cleaning pine needles from your roof and gut-

See Riley, page 5A

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



## A Blessing in Disguise

Researching your family history brings many unexpected stories about members of your relatives. Some of these stories are good ones, and some of them are not so good. For example, in my situation, I can remember a relative of which I had great respect because, during the time I knew him, he showed love and kindness toward me. However, he was a different person in his early years. And yet another person was always very quiet, never having much of anything to say. The very quiet one in the family may be the biggest hero in my mind because of his actions.

I am not telling this story to cast bad thoughts on my Paw paw. During the time I knew him, he was good to us grandchildren. That is how I remember him. However, he was a different person during his younger days. Let's just say he mellowed greatly from his youth to his golden years.

Bill Adams was the youngest child of Richard and Cynthia. His mother made sure to treat him extra special. As a young boy, he was quite fond of fried chicken, fried potatoes, cornbread and peas. He was so fond of this meal that he was known to pout if he didn't get it. There were many times that he would push the food aside and refuse to eat his meal until his mother took the time to cook his favorite. She tried to cook other things, but when she cooked something other than his favorite, he would sit at the table until his mother cooked what he wanted. Sometimes he resorted to dumping the food on the plate to the floor to show his displeasure.

When he was 14, he met a young gal called "Delph" at a Church Singing. Delphia Baker sang in a quartet that performed the old-time way of "shaped note singing." Paw paw loved to hear the young lady sing, and he was soon enthralled with her. The young pair soon began courting. Just after he turned 15, he proposed to the 14-year-old girl. His proposal was, "Delph, you'll either marry me tonight or I'll never come back." The young couple married against the wishes of their respective families.

The young couple settled into a new lifestyle. In most marriages, there is a lot of adaptation by both individuals to make things work. However, in this marriage, my grandmother adapted much more than her husband. The Baker Family was very close and constantly visiting one another. Family get-togethers always included a lot of good food and enormous amounts of laughter. Paw paw never participated much in those kinds of things. He was very reserved and quiet. First, she had to quit singing with the quar-

See Cummings, page 5A

**Around The Farm**  
*Mickey Cummings*



## Tomato Growing

Tomatoes are one of the most common vegetables in home gardens. They are great on a sandwich or eaten like an apple. You can eat them and use them in all different recipes. My favorite is a fried green tomato. Tomato growing is rewarding and delicious.

Tomatoes are unique in that there are more tomato varieties out there than other garden plants. That's because of the multitude of different ways that tomatoes can be used. So when you're planting tomatoes, start with the end goal in mind. Use a variety that works well for what you want to do with it. Also, take a look at the disease resistance that tomato has in it. This can vary a lot by variety. Disease resistance will give you a serious leg up and give you a lot fewer headaches as the season goes on.

You'll want to plant in an area that gets 6-8 hours of sunlight and has a soil pH of 6.2-6.8. Tomatoes can grow roots all along their stem. So when planting transplants plant them down to the first set of leaves. Plant them 2 feet apart in row, and set rows 4-6 feet apart. Firm up the soil around the transplants to push out any air pockets. After transplanting put 2 tablespoons of 5-10-10 fertilizer around each plant.

Most plants will need to be staked. You can buy cages to stake the plants. Alternatively, you can use wooden stakes that are 5-6 feet long. Drive a stake into the ground between every other plant about 1 foot deep. You can take twine or strips of cloth and weave these around the stakes to support the plants. As the plants grow higher, you can add more levels of twine.

Apply 1.5 pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet prior to planting. Once tomatoes start forming on the vine and are the size of a quarter apply 1 pound of 10-10-10 per 100 square feet. Repeat that application every 3-4 weeks until harvest is finished.

Tomatoes need about 1-2 inches of water per week. If we don't get enough rain, you can supply the rest. When watering plants it's better to give 1 or 2 heavy soakings, than multiple light sprinkles.

There are many insects that can cause problems for tomatoes. Insecticidal soap does a pretty good job for most soft-bodied insects. BT is works well for caterpillars and insects that feed on the plants. Scout your garden regularly so that you quickly find new pests. Pests are much easier to control in small numbers and when they aren't full-grown.

Blossom end rot is caused by a calcium deficiency. Maintaining a good pH, keeping

See Williams, page 5A

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



## Chamber of Commerce

We ended last week with two major announcements. The governor announced that some businesses could begin reopening Friday and several others on Monday of this week. Secondly, Washington approved additional money for the Paycheck Protection Program. After these announcements, we spoke with local business owners and community leaders and found that they all echoed the same message; both were great news, but we should proceed with caution as we move forward together as a community.

At the time this column was written, the number of new cases for Union County has increased to 25, which can most likely be attributed to an increase in Easter weekend travel and an increase in testing. Our businesses will continue to proceed with caution and practice and adhere to CDC guidelines and recommendations with the intentions of avoiding additional lock-down measures.

Unfortunately, several small businesses

See Chamber, page 5A

## North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

**Kenneth West**  
Publisher/Owner

**Shawn Jarrard**  
Editor

Website: [www.nganews.com](http://www.nganews.com)

Email: [northgeorgianews@hotmail.com](mailto:northgeorgianews@hotmail.com)

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

**Derek Richards**  
Advertising Director

**Todd Forrest**  
Sports Editor

**Lowell Nicholson**  
Photographer

Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m. • Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - One Year \$40. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1988, at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.

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