

Fireworks and the Fourth

The Fourth of July is one of the most popular holidays. Summer is in full swing, and we celebrate the Independence Day of the greatest nation on earth.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief David Dyer



As we have said many times, safety is always first. Fireworks are fun and exciting, but they can also be very dangerous.

Here are a few tips and considerations when using fireworks. Never allow young children to handle fireworks, and older children should only use fireworks under close adult supervision.

The weather this time of the year has been extremely hot and abnormally dry. Do not utilize fireworks in areas which are in danger of igniting such as dry grass fields, piled leaves, or dry woodland areas.

Another consideration is the laws that apply to fireworks. There are too many elements of the law to be explained here. The laws and ordinances cover things such as the minimum age to purchase fireworks, the time of day/night to ignite fireworks, the location, and the distances from certain areas.

These are just a few things to keep in mind during the holiday weekend. Union County Fire Department wants everyone to

See Dyer, page 7A

Fragrance of Life

"I call myself a cultural Christian," said the outspoken atheist, Richard Dawkins. "I'm not a believer, but... I sort of feel at home in the Christian ethos."

The ethos of Western civilization derives from Judeo-Christian values. Those who distort Christianity as irrational, superstitious, or abusive ignore the Biblical ideals of equality, dignity, justice, compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation, charity, and freedom.

The fertile ground for planting the American experiment was the recognition of a Creator who endows the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I share Os Guinness' hope that America is not beyond the point of no return. "The nation that has grown careless in defending its rich and distinctive heritage and is now being

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

I couldn't help but notice that the local trivia contests are beginning again as we move through the Spring season and into the Summer. The next couple of weeks I will provide some basic trivia about Union County and the surrounding area.

Q. How many voting precincts do we have in Union County?

A. We have 11 voting precincts. The precincts are scattered across the county - ensuring that everyone has local access. They are Ivy Log, Dooly, Gum Log, Blairsville, Pat Colwell, Trackrock, Coosa, Jones Creek, Owl Town, Choestoe, and Suches.

Q. I've seen a few cemeteries in Blairsville and some associated with churches. How many cemeteries do we have in Union County?

A. According to our Geographic Information Systems Professionals, there are 116 cemeteries in Union County. Some are associated with churches, but some are older family cemeteries.

Q. What is the status on cell towers? Sometimes I have good cell service and sometimes I can't get any kind of signal.

A. There are 13 cell towers in Union County. According to Verizon, the quality of cell service can be impacted for several reasons:

- 1. Network Connections. Large numbers of users in densely populated areas can take up a great deal of cell tower service.

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

Extremist Reply

Dear Editor, Mr. Mason listed what the sheriff's department has done, all of which should be done. However, the issues that came up during the campaign have not been addressed under your watch.

The candidates in the campaign listed multiple problems with the sheriff's department in this county that, to date, have not been addressed.

Your officers should have been vetted for past criminal activity. But instead, you came out and actively supported a person with a criminal background to run for sheriff.

See Lausier, page 7A

Rebuttals

Dear Editor, Have you ever read Op/Eds and thought to yourself, "Man, the people who feel this way had better calm down or they're gonna have a stroke or heart attack?" Well, I've read a couple these past few weeks. Two "passionate" writers, one of which has a history of disliking our Congressman Andrew Clyde and one new arrival to our fair county, wrote in and went off on Mr. Clyde.

Responsible Constitutionalism

Dear Editor, For all the political theater and blaming the other side, whatever that might be, have you ever considered that the root problem in this country is us? You and every person in this Constitutional Republic are the ones totally at fault.

See Richardson, page 7A

Financial Outlook

Dear Editor, Well it's official and you probably missed it... we (the U.S.) are in even deeper do do. Significant financial upheaval is likely ahead for the world as Saudi Arabia has decided to NOT renew its 80-year petrodollar deal with the United States.

See Bell, page 7A

Thank You, Mickey

Dear Editor, I read the North Georgia News each week. It's a great small-town paper. Other than praying over the newborn babies and pets in a shelter for responsible owners to make a home for them, I enjoy Mickey Cummings' columns. They are always heartwarming, funny and sometimes hilarious.

Gary Lee



Self-Esteem in Friendship II

An individual who has a healthy self-esteem does not have to prove himself or herself to anyone. In fact, it is not unusual for such a person to make a constructive difference in the lives of those with low self-esteem.

Successful Mental Health Dr. James Ray Ashurst PH.D.



The vital thing is that the healthy person values and accepts others to the point of not trying to change them. This is not the responsibility of a healthy friend.

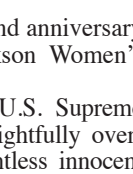
See Ashurst, page 7A

Celebrating Life

Last week marked the second anniversary of the victorious Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization decision.

On June 24th, 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark Dobbs ruling rightfully overturned Roe v. Wade, saving countless innocent lives.

United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde



Since Dobbs, we've gained tremendous ground in the fight for life. Currently, 24 states

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Rough as a Cob

For many years I have heard the term "rough as a cob" and knew the meaning in my mind. However, to be sure of this meaning, you must experience the cob firsthand.

Around The Farm Mickey Cummings



Harold and Johnny enjoyed eating, and Granny enjoyed cooking. The boys had eaten big meals for three consecutive days, but, the two young men refused to go to the outhouse.

Early the fourth morning the boys went to the barn for early chores before breakfast. As Johnny bent over to retrieve eggs in the hen house a look of concern appeared on his face.

Later Harold told his mother all about the outhouse and the corn cobs. All Dad remembers is the fact that there was lots of groaning and hollering coming from the outhouse.

However, some things are easy, like telling people thank you for their contributions and hard work. Back on the first Saturday of June, "Beef Day" was celebrated at the Union County Farmers Market.

See Cummings, page 7A

New Agriculture Laws

The Georgia legislature passed a number of laws this year that affect agriculture. I will attempt to discuss some of them here. Please keep in mind that my discussion of these new laws is aimed at educating people on what is happening.

Watching and Working Jacob Williams



HB 1172 relates to property rights and the access that the public has to streams. This has been a particularly thorny issue that the legislature is attempting to navigate.

SB 420 regards the foreign acquisition of farmland in Georgia. It prohibits a person or entity who is not a legal resident or American citizen from purchasing farmland, if they are considered an agent of a nation that is a foreign adversary.

SB 340 has added DEF (diesel exhaust fluid) to the list of products that farmers can purchase with a GATE (Georgia Agriculture

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2. Physical Barriers. Mountains and buildings can obstruct the delivery of service in specific areas.

3. Seasonal Changes. Weather can obstruct cell service delivery.

4. Building materials. Various building materials or designs can block some cell service. This is why some basements cannot get service.

5. Antennae Direction. Companies point the antennas towards the most densely populated areas. If you suddenly lose coverage in a specific area, a tower may have been recently changed to point in a different direction.

Q. How can you define or illustrate what Union County looks like with regards to property found within the county limits?

A. This is a very interesting question because we have much data about land use. As of the beginning of 2024, there were 20,087 addresses registered with the 911 system. These addresses are categorized into 9 Land Districts. There are 24,192 land parcels. Of that, 210,558.94 acres are found in Union County, and 732.07 acres are within the Blairsville City Limits. There are also currently 534 subdi-

visions in Union County. This information is followed closely by the Union County Geographic Information Systems personnel.

Q. Because we are a rural area, I sometimes worry about how the Fire Department can get water to us in an emergency situation. Can you talk about that?

A. First, let me say that our data shows there are 1035 fire hydrants throughout most of Union County – an increase of 49 hydrants over the past couple of years. In areas that do not have a fire hydrant, the fire department uses a water shuttle. This is made possible by the fire trucks and tankers that respond to a fire. Most fire trucks carry 1,000 gallons of water and the tankers carry 2,000 gallons. The initial response to any structure fire will be at least two engines and three tankers for a total of 8,000 gallons of water. The fire department then shuttles water from the nearest water source such as a fire hydrant to the fire scene.

The fire trucks and tankers used to fight fire and shuttle the water were purchased through donations to the volunteer fire stations and through SPLOST funds.

Rains... continued from Page 6A

what's your point? I went back to several issues of the North Georgia News to see just what could have set them off, and everything I saw that was written by Mr. Clyde was accurate. When President Trump was in office in 2016, Russia didn't attack Ukraine. That being said, Russia did attack and take The Crimea from Ukraine back in 2014 when Barack Obama was in office and then attacked The Ukraine again once Joe Biden was sworn into office. Iran's proxies, such as Hamas, hadn't been attacking Israel because Iran didn't have any spare money to give their proxies until Joe Biden gave them \$6 billion, and then BOOM, Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. The Left and Liberals control most if not all the major universities. That, oddly enough, is where you see all the civil unrest and antisemitism that's been happening lately in our country coming from. Biden has failed to stand up to China. Let's not forget how much money Biden's son Hunter got from a Chinese private equity fund, BHR Partners. BHR is backed by some of China's largest state banks and by their local governments, according to U.S. media. China is emboldened by such a relationship and continues to threaten Taiwan. Biden has cut off sales of U.S. liquid natural gas to Europe, forcing Europe to look to Russia for that commodity. So as far as the world goes, yes, Biden, and since Biden is a Democrat, The Democrats are to blame for quite a few of our world's current situations.

2. Writer of the June 12 Op/Ed says that Mr. Clyde callously and knowingly spreads repeatedly debunked and disproven lies. I'd like to know what those were, but the writer didn't elaborate and, as I stated earlier, when I looked at the back issues of the paper I found no such "lies." Everything I saw that Mr. Clyde had said was spot on.

3. Writer of June 12 Op/Ed says Mr. Clyde continues his blind, irrational and absurd fealty to Donald Trump. I don't think so. Donald Trump is a former U.S. president and is Republican nominee for president in 2024. Why would a conservative with a firsthand knowledge of what's at stake in this election and what's going on around this country and world NOT support him? For that matter, a case could be made that you, writer, blindly support Joe Biden after all the mistakes he's made during his current administration, such as inflation, which in a report by The Bureau of Labor Statistics is up overall 19.3%. All food inflation up 21.2%. All shelter inflation up 21.4%. Auto insurance inflation up 51.5%. And electricity inflation up 29.3%.

Some would say that after seeing those numbers and experiencing it firsthand, your blind obedience to Joe Biden borders on the absurd.

4. The writer says that Mr. Clyde addresses absolutely nothing happening in or for the benefit of District 9 or the state of Georgia. Dear writer: NOTHING in this country happens in a vacuum. What happens in other places sooner or later will happen here. Therefore I say to you that by taking on and pointing out the failures of the Biden Administration, inflation, energy policy, illegal immigration and so forth that will affect us directly, Mr. Clyde is doing EXACTLY what we sent him to Washington to do.

Now let's address some of the things said by the Op/Ed

writer who is a new arrival to our fair county. First of all, Welcome Writer. Secondly, this writer wrote in on June 19 and pretty much parroted what the writer from June 12 said about Congressman Clyde but went a step further in my opinion by calling their Op/Ed "Enough Already." By entitling their Op/Ed that, it would appear that they believe people such as myself and others who think differently than they do are nothing more than petulant children with no valid views or observations, and that they (Liberals) are the only "adults" in the room with the proper perspective on what's happening in our county and country and that we should just be quiet and listen to what they say and do what they tell us to do. That person spoke of how well the country is doing economically by touting the success of the stock market. The stock market is NOT the economy, but I'm glad that they have enough money to invest in the stock market since most of us are just trying to afford fuel and groceries whose prices have risen continually since Joe Biden took office. See the inflation data I provided earlier in this piece. The Op/Ed writer of June 19 further writes that they wouldn't patronize a business that openly supports former President Trump. Hmm, that seems really Petty & Divisive to me. I don't care who the owners of a business support politically. If I need their services and they can get the job I need done, I'll use them.

Here's the sad truth about Liberals. They destroy an area with their policies. Most of which defy common sense. Then when they themselves feel threatened by the results of their own policies, they move to an area that is far safer than the one they left. We've seen that firsthand since the pandemic. It would be fine if they left it at that, but they don't. They continue to promote and support those same destructive policies by voting for them in the place they have just moved to. THAT'S how you destroy a country piece by piece. One would think that, seeing firsthand what their policies have done to the places from which they came, they wouldn't vote for them again, but they do. That's called Einstein's definition of insanity, which states: Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome.

Joe Biden spent the entire 2020 campaign telling us he would bring the country together by governing from the middle and being a president for all of us in the U.S. Then from day one of his administration continuing until today, he has governed from the Far Left, pandering only to people of his own party and those who support his policies 100%. In my opinion, you can't get any more Divisive & Dishonest than THAT.
Claude Rains Jr.

Ashurst...

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person grow inwardly, which in turn changes the outward person. It isn't a fast process because the poor self-esteem individual has to muster up the courage and fortitude to enact the changes. But the friend is there to encourage and to guide. It becomes a privilege, an honor, in which to help someone else. Such is based on a loving friendship.

A true friend never gets in your way unless you happen to be going down.
(Arnold Glasgow)

Cummings... continued from Page 6A

host this event. Sponsors for the event included the following: Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D, Nelson's Tractor, the Blue Ridge Mountain Cattleman's Association, Brasstown Beef, Ivy Log Meat Processing and Osborn Farms. Brasstown Beef, Ivy Log Meat Processing and Osborn Farms donated all the beef to make the hamburgers, and all the beef was locally raised and processed. Also, Ingles, Walmart and Food Land donated items to the event.

Nearly 30 partnering agencies attended the event to share knowledge about beef production and natural resource conservation. Approximately 500 hamburgers were provided to the public, and 5,000 people attended the event. As a result and on behalf of the Blue Ridge Mountain Soil and Water Conservation District, I would like to thank our sponsors, vendors and the public for coming out

Bell...

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really think the Green New Deal will save us from using oil? If you think inflation and interest rates are high now, we haven't seen anything, not even the Jimmy Carter 18% years.

Since 1800, 51 out of 52 countries who have reached 130% Debt-to-GDP ratio have defaulted. Japan is the 1, and its people saved it because they were not in debt like many in the U.S. It's taken 30-plus years for their stock market to get back to where it was. We were at 100% of GDP in 2013, and now 123%... doubt we'll be the second to not default, as our unfunded liabilities are estimated at \$100-plus trillion.

If you have a variable-rate mortgage, you need to convert it to a fixed rate, even at the current higher rates. A 20% credit card rate means you're paying double for what you bought every 3.6 years. Unfortunately, this will look good compared to what's coming. I'm sorry it's not IF this will happen – it's how soon.

Dick Bell

Lausier...

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He was charged with felonies but pleaded down to misdemeanors in a plea deal. Many people found that palatable – OH GOSH, just a misdemeanor! I heard that during the campaign. I also heard plenty of problems that the candidates discussed that should be addressed in this county but have not been.

So yes, this is a good ole boy network, and this past election and the problems within the department proved this.

I pointed out the basic facts and issues, and the evidence stands for itself.
Eva Lausier

Williams...

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Tax Exemption) card. Possession of a GATE card removes the sales tax from a purchase. You must meet some minimum agricultural standards to qualify for a GATE card, such as producing an agricultural commodity.


HB 827 increases the penalty for theft of livestock. The possible prison sentence was raised from two to 15 years and a potential fine of \$10,000.

SB 494 is called the Georgia Hemp Farming Act. In 2018 the Farm Bill made hemp a legal crop in all 50 states again. Many states scrambled to enact laws to regulate hemp production as required by the federal government. SB 494 is a further refinement of that so that Georgia has a more functional law regulating hemp and its production and usage.

SB 436 expands the definition of "farm use vehicle" so that more farm equipment can legally be driven on any highway. This excludes interstates.

I wrote this column with help from the Georgia Farm Bureau News Vol. 86 No. 2 article by Adam Belflower.

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William T. Meeks, Sr.
on the anniversary
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Clyde... continued from Page 6A

have laws defending life at 15 weeks or sooner, with 20 states – including Georgia – protecting unborn babies with a heartbeat.

Up in Washington, I remain resolute in the fight to safeguard the sanctity of life. Last year, I led nearly 90 of my House Republican colleagues in reintroducing the Protect the UNBORN (Undo the Negligent Biden Orders Right Now) Act to prohibit the implementation of and funding for President Biden's pro-abortion executive orders.

Additionally, I've co-sponsored numerous pieces of pro-life legislation, including:

The Protecting Life and

Taxpayers Act: This common-sense bill ensures your hard-earned tax dollars do not fund the evils of abortion.

The Life at Conception Act: This legislation declares what most Americans believe and what science has known all along – that human life begins at conception.

The Protecting Life and Integrity in Research Act: This bill restricts the Department of Health and Human Services from conducting or supporting human fetal tissue research.

Please know that I remain an unapologetic champion of life in Congress. After all, our first and most fundamental right is the right to LIFE!

Fowler... continued from Page 6A

transformed beyond recognition," he writes, "is that nation that could still be renewed if only it awakens to reality and chooses wisely." I pray for Americans to stop cutting the flower from the root and be renewed by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not just about the future of America, but about happiness and quality of life for you, both now

and in eternity.

God "manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing" (2 Cor. 2:14-15). May your fellow Americans detect the fragrance of life in you!
www.mountainchristian.net

Richardson... continued from Page 6A

The Constitution. This is something that our elected officials have forgotten and most of us never knew. We are the boss and sovereign and they are the employee and servants. They think in terms of just the opposite. This is true at all levels including school boards, city, county, state, and of course federal. For 160 years none of our forefathers even knew they were supposed to be performing this responsibility, therefore that's why many of us never knew.

If you are unhappy with the trajectory our country is going, blame no one but ourselves. The point is that we have miserably failed at doing our duty in what was given to us. We have never taken the responsibility, but instead have relied on our elected officials to do the work for us. Well that didn't turn out very well, did it! That's not the way it's supposed to work, and when you get those so-called elected, or now days selected, officials into that 10 square mile hellhole called Washington D.C., they suddenly become easy pick-

ings by controlling billionaires, massive size corporations and lobbyists. Regardless of how good and honest many start out, it doesn't take long for them to become greedy and power hungry. The same goes for local and state, just on a different landscape. I'm not putting the finger on any one person or office because occasionally you will find honesty and integrity, but just trying to make a point that "We The People" have to take control of our destiny. It's not so much about us, but it's for the generations to come.

If you are interested and truly concerned about finding what is probably the best solution to our problems, spent about \$10 at Amazon and order "The Great We-Set" book by David M. Zuniga and read just the first 102 pages. It's an eye-opener that might just change your focus. It's time for us to take charge of our responsibilities. It's time for a change if only 1% will come forward to roll up their sleeves and take the responsibility endowed to us, We The People.

George Richardson