

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## Thunderstorms

In the last few weeks, we have seen some significant weather and thunderstorms come through our area. The summer heat and humidity provide the right conditions for the development of these severe thunderstorms. They can pop up suddenly and produce heavy rain, dangerous lightning, and flash floods. Union County Fire Department would like to remind everyone of the dangers of these thunderstorms and what you can do to keep safe.

The first thing is to stay informed. Television, radio, social media, and cellphone apps such as CodeRed can provide information on severe weather events. Knowing the difference between a Severe Thunderstorm Watch and a Warning can be very helpful. A Severe Thunderstorm Watch means severe thunderstorms are possible and we should be prepared. A Severe Thunderstorm Warning means a severe storm is expected and we should take shelter. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Be prepared for possible severe weather and plan events accordingly.

Lightning that is associated with severe thunderstorms can be very dangerous. If you can hear thunder, then there is the potential for lightning in your area. The best practice for possible lightning near you is to get indoors and avoid possible conduction areas. If in a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees. If in an open area, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. Be alert for flash floods. If on open water, get to land and find shelter immediately.

Thunderstorms can not only produce lightning but can produce heavy rain in a small area and in a short amount of time. This heavy rain can make driving very dangerous due to water on the road and lack of visibility. The best practice is to slow down; increase distance between vehicles or even pull into a parking area until it passes. The heavy rain can also produce flash flooding. Avoid moving water and never drive through running water. Just six inches of moving water can knock you down and two feet of water can sweep your vehicle away. If there is a chance of flash flooding, move immediately to higher ground.

We all want to enjoy our summer but we must keep safety in mind. Stay informed of potential severe weather. Be aware of

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

David Dyer



## Steadfast Hope

I attended a conference in Oxford, UK recently. That's probably why I noticed this news story.

King Lawal, a county leader in the UK, posted a Bible verse and commented on it. He was subsequently suspended from his political post, sacked from his job, and canceled from other positions in the community. Lawal responded, "As the only black councillor in the whole of Northamptonshire, I know what it is like to be in the minority, and I would never discriminate against anyone. I have diligently represented all my constituents; however, I must also be free to express my beliefs without fear."

My interest here is not in the content or appropriateness of Lawal's post. It's his courage I notice and commend to you. Whether he anticipated the harsh pushback or not, he had to know the risk of presenting his counter-cultural views on morality. I can't resist borrowing from A. W. Tozer, "The most fervent devotees of tolerance are invariably intolerant of everyone who speaks about God with certainty."

To my friends mystified by Lawal's risk-taking, you need to understand from whence cometh such courage. Faith in the God of the Bible means consent to the moral code revealed by Him. The philosopher Nietzsche put it this way: "Christianity presupposes that man does not know, cannot know, what is good for him, what evil: he believes in God, who alone knows it... it has truth only if God is the truth - it stands and falls with faith in God." God is the truth, so you can trust that what He has said is for your good.

God's truth is reason enough to take courage. To repeat what God has revealed is to demonstrate love - to the critic caught up in cancel culture, to the Gen Z zoomer who fears Christianity as "dangerous," and to the materialist who absolutely believes in no absolutes. We take risks to offer others the hope that "now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 Jn. 3:2-3).

These are strange times when the wolf has the other ani-

See Fowler, page 5A

**All Things New**

Wayne Fowler



## Commissioner's Questions

**Q. I saw a photo on Facebook of a grist mill that was built at Meeks Park. Exactly where at Meeks Park is it located?**

A. The grist mill at Meeks Park is located near the bank of Butternut Creek at Meeks Park II. This recreational area is approximately 1.4 miles from the Blairsville square and is accessed by vehicle from the Blue Ridge Hwy. Visitors will drive southwest to Sid Chandler Road and will turn right into the recreational area. Also in this beautiful part of the park, visitors will find adult outdoor exercise equipment, a children's play area, and a kayak/canoe ramp for entering the Nottely River.

**Q. Was the Meeks Park grist mill built from scratch on the property, or was it moved from another location?**

A. The Hughes/Tate Grist Mill was originally located in the Ivy Log Community of Union County, Georgia next to the North Carolina line. It was built by Andrew Jackson "Jack" Hughes, Jr. in the late 1800's. It was operated by different people at different times in the early 1900's. The last person to own and operate the mill was Mr. Ocean Tate. He ground cornmeal and sold his meal to the public. When Mr. Tate retired, the gristmill was shut down and never fully operated again. The property was eventually passed down to Ocean Tate's grandson, Michael Thompson. Thompson donated the grist mill to Union County.

**Q. How was the Meeks Park grist mill moved and reconstructed? The process sounds fascinating.**

A. Before the deconstruction and rebuilding process began, much planning and consideration went into the details and expectations for the Hughes/Tate Grist Mill. For example, the following considerations were expressed: The building had to be situated above the flood level of the creek; the equipment was to be situated to allow maximum visibility by groups of people; the machinery, belt drives, and other moving parts were to be placed behind rails and guards for reasons of safety; and the spillway plug, pump (if needed) and wheel gate were to be controlled from inside the mill. These and other considerations were planned out far in advance of actually moving the grist mill. Additionally, re-

See Paris, page 5A

**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**

Lamar Paris



## Department of Injustice

Apparently sham indictments come in threes.

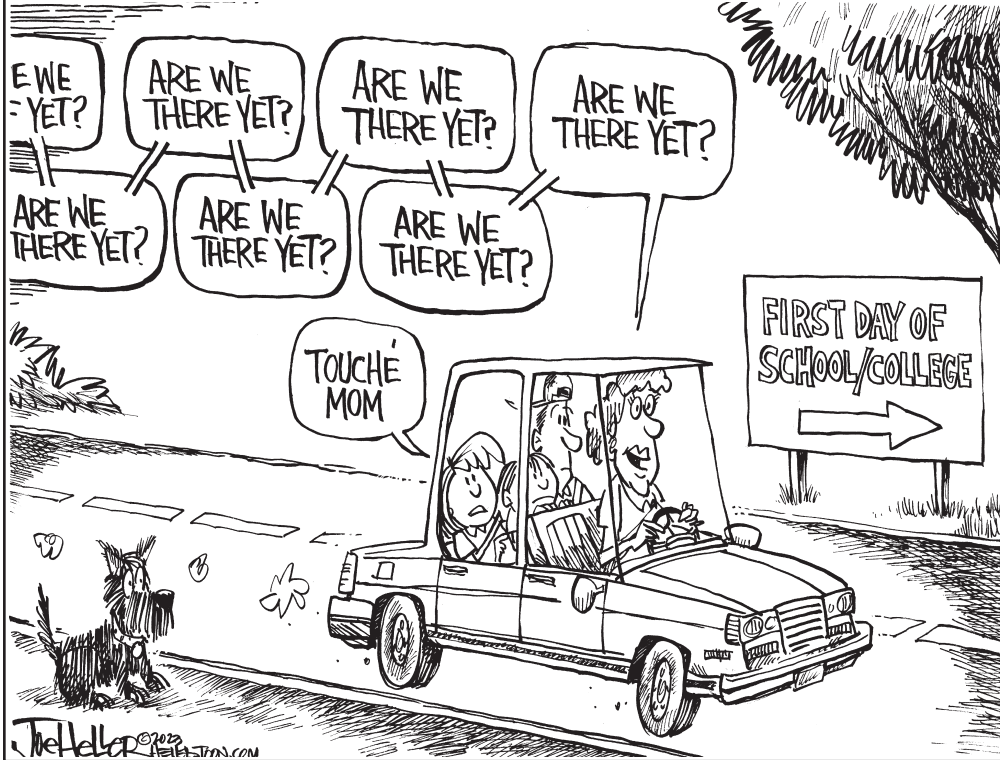
On August 1, President Donald Trump was indicted on charges related to Special Counsel Jack Smith's probe into January 6th and the 2020 election - marking his third bogus indictment in just four months' time. While the 45-page document may read like an absurdly liberal New York Times op-ed, the efforts behind the indictment should terrify every American.

It is abundantly clear that the Left knows that they cannot beat President Trump at the ballot box in 2024, leaving Democrats desperate for an escape. So rather than trying to beat his opponent fair and square, Joe Biden is dangerously abusing his power as the Chief Executive to politically persecute Donald Trump.

And there's no denying that the timing of each indictment is uncanny... Crazy coincidence, right? Not a chance. This is all part of

See Clyde, page 5A

**United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde**



## Chamber of Commerce

It's not every day that a lunch meeting leaves you feeling hyped up and inspired, but that's exactly what happened on Thursday at our Annual Power Lunch. Our guest speaker, Kevin Williams, owner of Canton Chick-fil-A, and author of "Irrational Kindness," delivered a powerful message about the importance of showing irrational kindness to others. As business owners, we can get so caught up in the daily grind and routine that we forget the impact that any small act of kindness can have on our employees, customers, and community.

Of course, our Annual Power Lunch wouldn't be a Chamber event without some fun and laughter thrown in. The welcoming team did not disappoint, with plenty of clapping and cheering for everyone as they entered. I couldn't help but smile and feel grateful for the supportive community we have here in Blairsville. It's times like these that remind me of the power of coming together to lift each other up. There may even

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**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**

Steve Rowe



## Letters to the Editor

### Helpful Neighbors

Dear Editor,

With all the bad news on the TV every day, I would like to say there are still a lot of good people out there in our area. On Monday, Aug. 7, when the storms moved in, a tree came down across Skenah Gap Rd. Two gentlemen got out in the heavy rain and moved the tree so the rest of us could pass. One even went back and got his chainsaw to cut up the tree so it did not cause any problem.

Then on GA 60, the storm took out two power poles. Again, our neighbors were there in

See Moody, page 5A

### Previously Loved Items

Dear Editor,

The Blairsville and Union County area is full of kind hearted people that want to help as can be seen by the number of thrift shops and nonprofits selling our previously loved items to support a variety of causes.

My friends that like to go "junking" find this area a cornucopia of fine shopping for their Ebay and other collections. Within the last year, there were a couple of letters to the editor that discussed what is appropriate for donation and then a rebuttal. I ran across this short article that

See Brogden, page 5A

### Memories

Dear Editor,

We all have memories, some good and some not so good. It's wise to keep the bad ones covered with the good ones so they can't surface and remind us of mistakes, missed opportunities or failures. Inside each of us is a little bit of the child we used to be. Instead of putting smiley faces and thumbs up on someone's Facebook page we haven't seen in 50 years or so, why not take that opportunity to revisit a favorite child-

See Vickers, page 5A

### Progress Dictates Change

Dear Editor,

The conflict around the petition being circulated regarding county government moving to a board of commissioners rather than a sole commissioner is shocking to me. Freedom of speech is one of our most basic rights, yet passionate people behind this opportunity are being harassed regularly. I sadly witnessed it a couple weeks ago at the Farmers Market by a county official and a resident. I entered into the conversation, and the resident declared, "I am a seventh generation local." That is wonderful; however,

See Turnbull, page 5A

## Inner Tapes - III

This is a true story with some minor changes.

His name was Robert. He never ever recalled smiling once he became a teenager. Not a single photo of himself in the family album was of a happy, grinning adolescent. When he was urged to smile or just grin, his facial expression was more like the grimace of an old man.

Robert had an affluent background. As an entrepreneur, with a master's degree from a renowned state university, he sailed brilliantly into the sea of success. As a family man of twin sons with a seemingly happy marriage of four years, he looked the part of prosperity. Robert was living a successful, self-fulfilling life on the outside. But on the inside was a totally different story.

The well-hidden agenda in Robert's family life was a mom who suffered clinically from paranoid schizophrenia. The days that she did not take her medicine resulted in a living nightmare for Robert. If that of his mother's condition was not enough, the father's inability to control his frightful outbursts of intense anger could send chills up one's spine. The anger was unpredictable and horrific to this young boy named Robert. He lived in fear, terror, and distress.

Robert was reared in a wealthy gated community. The outward appearance of the family was that of fun and of good times. Such an appearance gave them a reputation of being great citizens who cared deeply about those in need. It was all an act, a show. Behind closed doors, life for young Robert was just a day-by-day miserable existence.

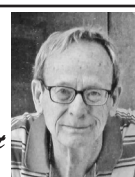
We first met at a church conference meeting in which I was the guest speaker. On several occasions during the three days, his and my paths would cross cordially with a brief salutation. It was on Saturday evening that Robert and I changed upon one another. I ended up listening to one of the most gruesome life stories that I had ever encountered. If I had not been face-to-face with Robert and had not witnessed his ghastly face, I would have refused to believe his horrific tale.

Tapes started at the beginning of his life, and Robert became a class-A victim. He was never ever able to remember being told that he was loved or a wonderful joy in the family. He had no recollection of self-enhancing messages from either of his parents. He grew up believing that he was the family liability. His negative tapes of being worthless and unlovable cemented into place over time. His vicious tapes were so powerful that when he eventually heard glow-

See Ashurst, page 5A

**Successful Mental Health**

Dr. James Ray Ashurst PH. D.



## Logan Turnpike Trail

Hiking the Logan Turnpike Trail - I first heard about the Logan Turnpike from C. R. Collins. There have been many times which I heard him talk about traveling over the Logan Turnpike with his father.

According to the late Ethylene Dyer Jones, who had written many articles about the road, this road was first constructed in 1821 by John Lyon and Joel Dickerson. They latter sold the rights to the road and some extensive land holdings on the southern slopes of the Blue Ridge to Major Willis Logan for \$3,000. He operated the road for 30 years. But, other members of the family operated the toll booth on the south side of the mountain until Highway 129 opened in 1925. The road was 7.5 miles long and made its way up the mountain through the Tesnatee Gap to Choestoe.

A stage coach from Augusta, Georgia, to Athens, Tennessee, used the Turnpike, and Major Logan established a stagecoach stop which entertained overnight boarders. Wagons with four wheels were charged 2 cents per mile. Market animals driven over the Turnpike to Gainesville were also charged on a per animal basis. Once again according to Ethylene Dyer Jones, many farmers in Union County would drive animals such as sheep, hogs, cattle and turkeys across the mountain to Gainesville to market the animals.

She says in her written accounts that Jack Shuler and his family lived at the foot of Tesnatee Gap where they operated the Ponder Post Office and a store. The family was paid by Major Logan to maintain the Logan Turnpike on the north side of Tesnatee Gap.

C. R. Collins once told me about a killing at Spiva Bend in Union County. There was a Spiva fellow hiding out during the Civil War. He refused to fight for the South. The Home Guard caught him by a large outcrop of rock. He refused to be captured so he was shot by that group of people. Also, at a spot near Tesnatee Gap where the Appalachian Trail crosses the Turnpike, the Runyon Boys were hanged from a Chestnut Tree for refusing to fight for the Southern Cause. Some ruffians took the matter of justice into their own hands.

Harold Dyer and Bud Akins are two people which have traveled the Turnpike and know much about its history. Some years ago, Harold and I walked the southern portion of the Old Turnpike. We walked from the Gap down the southern flank of the Blue Ridge toward Helen. Approximately 1/2 mile from the Gap we

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**Around The Farm**

Mickey Cummings



## Webworms

Have you seen webs spreading throughout your trees? They can be unsightly and leave brown patches where the webs are. Those are webworms. They are very common, so let's talk about these little guys that are spreading from tree to tree.

We have two types of caterpillars that make webs in trees in North Georgia. Eastern tent caterpillars will make webs in the spring. Fall webworms will make webs in the late summer or fall, hence their very original name. Webworms will have one to four generations each year. There are many different tree species that they will use to make their nest. They generally prefer to make their nests on deciduous trees over evergreens.

Webworms grow into a moth that has a one and a half inch wingspan. The wings are white and sometimes have black spots on them. The female moths will lay egg masses of up to 600 eggs. The egg masses are covered in hairs, which protects them from predators. When the caterpillars emerge from the eggs, they begin constructing nests on the ends of tree branches. The webworms will begin eating the new growth at the end of the branch. The webs that they construct protect them from predators and some insecticides. As the weather gets cooler, the caterpillars will burrow into the ground where they will pupate, the cocoon stage, and emerge as moths when the weather warms up again.

Webworms can heavily infest some trees. If a tree is heavily infested the webworms can completely defoliate the tree. Complete defoliation is not a common occurrence, but it is a possibility. Completely defoliating a tree leaves the tree bare and less attractive. However, deciduous trees are able to handle losing their leaves, because they will grow new ones back the next year.

In most situations, it isn't necessary to remove the webworms from trees. The damage that they do is largely aesthetic. If there are some webs on lower branches that are easy to prune then physical removal of the branches is an option. If the branches are out of reach, it is possible to use a long pole or rake to knock the webs out of the tree. A pressure washer is also an option to remove webs from hard to reach places. Opening up webworm nests will expose them to the elements and enable predators such as birds, assassin bugs, and parasitic wasps to get inside and control the webworms too.

It is possible to use insecticides to control

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**UGA extension Watching and Working**

Jacob Williams



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## Paris... continued from Page 4A

search was done on each mill component. The gear and the spindle were the only original parts remaining. Some replacement parts were purchased, and some parts were made especially for the mill. All internal wood structures for the gears were reconstructed off-site. The building was placed on piers, and the water wheel was positioned so that it discharged appropriately. Two full floors were built with 10 ft ceilings. The grist mill was reconstructed piece by piece.

### Q. How was the grist mill used before it was moved?

A. Grist is any grain that can be used to make flour. All accessible records indicate that the Hughes/Tate Grist Mill was primarily used to grind corn into cornmeal. However, unlike other mills in Union County that only ground corn, Tate sometimes milled wheat and rye, as well. The materials were ground using water from a mill spring. The water travels to the mill where it turns the water wheel, which then turns the gears in the basement that make the whole process work. When grinding for cornmeal

the waterwheel speed must be just right - somewhere between 8-12 rpm generally. The corn was ground between two stones and then sifted to strain out the larger pieces.

### Q. How is the grist mill used now that it has been reconstructed at Meeks Park?

A. The Hughes/Tate Grist Mill is currently used only to demonstrate the turning of the water wheel and to commemorate the grist mill process.

### Q. Is the grist mill running all the time?

A. The water wheel on the Hughes/Tate Grist Mill does not turn through the Winter months due to harsh cold conditions and the effects those conditions might have on the grist mill equipment. The water is channeled to the grist mill in late Spring and the wheel turns until Winter weather threatens.

### Q. Can I tour the inside of the Meeks Park grist mill?

A. For the most part, the interior of the grist mill remains locked; however, some tours are provided during the annual Sorghum Festival each October.

## Clyde... continued from Page 4A

President Biden's plan.

In addition to attempting to smear President Trump and obstruct his ability to campaign effectively, Joe Biden is using these witch hunt indictments to distract the American people from his family's corrupt and criminal past. Every week, we obtain more incriminating evidence against the Biden Crime Family Syndicate. And at every turn, Joe is ready to launch another strike at his political rival in hopes to divert our attention and shake up the news cycle.

It seems apparent to me that the Department of Justice - or rather, the Department of Injustice - is carrying the water for President Biden with its two-tiered system of justice.

Alarming, this is another example of the DOJ's intentional failure to maintain strict fidelity to the law and a direct repudiation of our nation's foundational principle of "Equal Justice Under Law."

Ultimately, President Biden and the Department of Injustice's efforts are overt acts of election interference. Therefore, it is imperative that Congress swiftly act to protect the integrity of the upcoming election, as well as restore Americans' faith in our justice system. Please know that I am actively working on solutions to help achieve this critical goal, and I look forward to sharing more details with you in the near future.

## Ashurst... continued from Page 4A

ing remarks from teachers and friends, the negative tapes trampled the healthy ones.

Robert lived out his negative tapes. He was able to put forth a pleasing and kind face in public. But inside, he was decaying. He had no idea of how to handle the grotesque tapes that he heard day and night.

When he began his journey of therapy, he was 30. As far as Robert goes now, he made it. However, it did not

happen overnight. While there are still times when his negative tapes jump into his conscious mind, he understands the origin and knows how to deal with them on a daily basis.

All of our tapes - positive and negative - are permanent. Some are healthy while others are destructive. The wonderful news is that the negative tapes can be re-directed. And the positive ones need to be enhanced and self-promoted on a continual basis.

## Chamber... continued from Page 4A

be some videos floating around of a few cartwheels down the hallway from our fun-loving Chamber members.

Please be sure to follow our Facebook page and website calendar for updates on future events - we don't want you to miss out on all of these wonderful opportunities.

Up next, the Chamber is offering a class on Artificial In-

telligence (AI) and how it can help your business, our Leading Ladies group will have a flatbread appetizer class, the Blairsville Business Expo should be bigger and better, and our Sporting Clays tournament will offer "bragging rights" while helping a local veteran's support group.

It takes everyone to make Life Better in Blairsville.

## Vickers... continued from Page 4A

hood or family memory?

Perhaps it was a vacation Bible School, a county fair or a special boyfriend or girlfriend that makes you smile when you remember that moment so long ago.

Maybe your high school graduation, memories from your college days or your wedding day would put a smile on your face if remembered. More importantly, perhaps it was the day you accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior. Why remember your first car or your first date? That was in the past and is pointless to remember.

But, I say, it's better to

remember family, friends and things you enjoyed in your past than to constantly be texting, tweeting and Facebooking or whatever the world is doing today.

Our past helps to keep us grounded in family, love, hope and faith. Let the good cover the bad and remember that looking into our past, and learning from it, will help to make tomorrow's memories better. The little boy or the little girl who is lost somewhere deep inside is expecting a visit from you. Go ahead -- remember. I promise that it will put a smile on your face.

Gene Vickers

## Turnbull... continued from Page 4A

does that matter? I live here full-time now, choosing my mountain home over my hometown of Atlanta. The lifestyle and sheer beauty of the area have brought us here. Surely we have all noticed the growth in Union County of 10% plus.

With that growth comes diversity. Not only have we outgrown the sole commissioner system, we all have differing

opinions on how county funds should be spent and deserve representation in local government.

This is not an attack on the current commissioner, his dedication or his performance. The job is just too big for one person. Only a handful of Georgia counties operate with a sole commissioner. Progress dictates change.

Rick Turnbull

## Williams... continued from Page 4A

control webworms, but I usually don't recommend them because webworms rarely cause significant damage to the tree.

If you decide to apply an insecticide one containing Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) or spinosad will kill the webworms and not beneficial insects that are also nearby. Broad-spectrum insecticides like pyrethroids, which are any insecticide with an active ingredient ending with -thrin,

will kill any insects it meets. You will have to open the nest first so that you get the insecticide inside the web.

As always, read the label before applying a pesticide so that you know how to properly handle and apply the pesticide.

If you have questions about webworms contact your county Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

## Cummings...continued from Page 4A

walked through an extremely steep section of the trail onto a little shelf that would hold perhaps 10 wagons. Harold told me that it was a two-day trip coming home from or going to Gainesville. And if the wagons got a late start coming home from Gainesville, they would sometimes stop and camp at this little shelf. Harold's Dad made many a trip over the gap. And his grandfather, upon the end of WWI, had come via the Logan Turnpike from Europe.

Harold was told by his father that people traveling over the Turnpike would cut logs in the gap and tie them to the wagons when going downhill to help them brake their speed.

While standing at the camping spot, he said, "I can just see some old wagons and a bunch of farmers including my grandfather sitting around a big campfire." We walked a little farther down the old roadbed to a place where a tornado had knocked down perhaps 15 acres of timber. Looking toward the east you could see rock outcroppings that witnessed much history on the old roadbed. If you looked to the west you could see the top of Cowrock Mountain and its rock faces on the southern slopes of the mountain. On one of these rocks a set of initials is carved into it which reads A. B. West. This young man lived in Choestoe and probably worked for the Shuler family in maintaining this roadbed. He fought on the side of the Confederacy during the war and afterward migrated to Alabama where he lived out his years.

Along the trail there are at least three nice little waterfalls with the largest located at the bottom of the steep part of the trail. Once the trail reaches the flat lands, you walk perhaps another 1/2 mile until you reach the end of the trail. The total length we walked was about 2 miles. We

turned around with about 1/2 mile of trail left. All along the trail there was an abundance of wildflowers. We could see Squaw Root, Wild Violets, Trillium and Squirrel Corn. Going down the trail is not difficult, but, coming back up is another story.

If you are interested in walking the trail it is easy to find, just take Highway 348 south from Highway 180. When you get to Testnatee Gap park on the right side of the road. The trail is marked by a sign just to the east of the parking lot.

## Fowler...

continued from Page 4A

mals convinced the sheep is dangerous. But it's the sheep who know the Shepherd who offers safety from the wolf. The sheep are on a hopeful journey along the narrow way to the small gate that leads to life.

As the hymn says, "Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness - all other ground is sinking sand." Now you know why Christians like Mr. Lawal express truth without fear. It's because of steadfast hope.

## Dyer ...

continued from Page 4A

any possible thunderstorms and know the watches and warnings.

Be ready for lightning, heavy rain, and possible flash flooding that may be associated with these thunderstorms.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

## Moody...

continued from Page 4A

the rain to stop traffic and clear what they could to allow the cars to get safely around the many wires in the road. I am so blessed to live in such a great place, where there are still folks that will go out of their way to help us all. I would like to say THANK YOU for doing that.

Joan Moody  
Suches

## Brogden...

continued from Page 4A

I found interesting and wanted to share: <https://www.npr.org/2021/05/06/993821945/goodwill-doesnt-want-your-broken-toaster>.

Thanks to all the generous hearts that donate their good items for a second life and for those that sort and process them for wonderful causes.

Lyric Adamson Brogden

### Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse



August 2, 2023

In memory of  
**Charlie McGraw**  
on his birthday  
by Allyson McGraw

August 14, 2023

In loving memory of  
**Robert Larry Ashley**

August 26, 2023

In memory of  
**Dr. William T. Meeks Sr.**  
on the occasion  
of his birthday  
by Ginger and Terry Meeks

August 31, 2023

In honor of  
**Exola & Leola**  
on their birthday  
by Chuck & Don

**Bell ringing information  
at 706-745-5493**