

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Station 1 Open House

Each year, the various fire stations of Union County Fire Department have their annual open house. An open house is the perfect opportunity for people to visit the fire stations, have some lunch, and view the equipment and trucks. Union County Fire Department Station 1 is having its annual open house on Saturday, Sept. 8.

Station 1 is the career station and is staffed with full-time, career firefighters. It is the headquarters for the fire department and houses the administration staff.

The Union County Emergency Management/Homeland Security Agency operates from this station, including the Emergency Operations Center, which is the county coordination center for major emergencies or disasters.

The open house creates an environment where everyone can meet the firefighters and ask them questions about the department, equipment, and their job. We encourage people to ask questions such as how the department responds, what firefighters do, how they use their equipment, and what training they have. The best part is that you get to know the firefighters who are protecting you, your family and your community.

The station will have the fire trucks on display, and firefighters will be able to give a tour of each truck. Station 1 has a 2017 Kenworth Fire Engine, which can pump 1,250 gallons a minute. The station also operates a 2017 Ford Rescue truck for various rescue emergencies and a 2018 Expedition for medical calls. These vehicles were purchased with SPLOST funds over the last couple of years.

There will also be demonstrations of some equipment. Firefighters will demonstrate their new turnout gear and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, which was purchased with a federal grant and SPLOST money in 2015. We will also have Swift Water Rescue and Wildland firefighting equipment on display.

Station 1 is located at 507 Shoe Factory Road. The open house will be held on Saturday, Sept. 8, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be free hot dogs and hamburgers for lunch; gifts for the kids; and door prizes. Please come out and support your fire department.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Makes Sense

Have you heard about the conspiracy theory called QAnon, or The Storm? Its adherents are developing it to explain politics and current events.

QAnon is quite speculative, and many observers call it baseless. It enfolds many previous conspiracy theories into one. It includes places (Babylon, Area 51, Charlottesville) and presidents (Washington, Clinton, Trump). It links people (Putin, Zuckerberg, Princess Diana) and movements (French Revolution, Antifa, MAGA). It tries to make sense of the world.

Everyone has a way of interpreting the world around us. Your judgments, preferences, and views are framed by life's ultimate questions. Ravi Zacharias identifies these as: Where did I come from? What is life's meaning? How do I define right from wrong? What happens when I die? These confront every religion and philosophy. Here are a few coherent responses that touch on the worldview of orthodox (traditional, Biblical) Christianity.

Origin: The Bible says God created humans in his image to rule over the other creatures (Gen. 1:26). From this, we know that humans have a value that no other creatures have. You know intuitively that killing a child on a playground is different than killing a rat in a lab, despite protestations of animal rights activists. It is when humans are devalued that injustice, racism and genocide happen.

Meaning: We are meant for another place. The Bible says we have eternity in our hearts and citizenship in heaven (Ecc. 3:11, Phil. 3:20). Recently deceased Charles Krauthammer, a skeptic, wrote, "You've got to explain the existence of the universe. Why can there be anything, and how can there be consciousness?" When your foundation is eternity, life's questions and woes are less daunting. Without eternity, you are dust in the wind.

Morality: Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel spoke about that city's violence. "I am asking that we not shy away from discussions about the importance of family and faith helping to develop character, self-respect, a value system, and a moral compass so kids know right from wrong." When each does what is right in his own eyes, people and communities are hurt. To be fully human

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

This week's questions and answers focus on the Union County Senior Center. Kathy Hill is the director and is in charge of participation and activities at the Senior Center. These questions are some of the most common questions we receive, and the answers contain general information. If you have further questions, you can call the Union County Senior Center at 706-439-6105.

Q. Where is the Senior Center located?

A. The Union County Senior Center is located at 95 Senior Center Drive. If you are traveling west on Georgia 515, you turn right on Meeks Avenue as if you were going to North Georgia Technical College. The first road immediately to your left is Senior Center Drive, and the Senior Center is at the bottom of the hill on the left. The Senior Center is available for Seniors who are 60 years old or older.

Q. Who do I contact about getting an elderly family member signed up for Meals on Wheels?

A. You can call the Senior Center at 706-439-6105 to get your family member signed up for the program or for additional information. The Meals on Wheels program provides home delivered meals to qualified seniors. There is no cost for this program, however, everyone is allowed an opportunity to donate toward their meals if they are able to do so.

Q. What type of programs does the Senior Center offer?

A. The Senior Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. They offer a wide variety of programs throughout the day, including various exercise programs, quilting, crafts, Bingo, Wii Bowling, and even line dancing. Each day at 11:30 a.m., there is a congregate meal provided at the Senior Center also. This is a great way for seniors to get a hot meal and socialize at the same time.

Q. Are there any activities for senior citizens who have Alzheimer's?

A. On Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., the Alzheimer's Respite Program is available. To participate in this program, the individual must be approved prior to participation. The Senior Center staff recommends calling and bringing the

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Drug Free Mountain Life

NO PROBLEM HERE: Communities in Denial

It seems that many Americans live in denial, particularly with respect to the opioid epidemic that has plagued our country for years now.

A study finds that Americans are more likely to see the opioid crisis nationally than locally, and in areas hardest hit by the opioid epidemic, few Americans surveyed felt drugs "posed a crisis in their own communities."

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.

A survey by the Laguna Treatment Hospital in Aliso Viejo, California, has found that Americans are more likely to recognize drug addiction nationwide than in their own communities. Most Americans are blind to the opioid epidemic in their own backyards, a study shows, despite predictions the crisis could claim more than half a million lives in the U.S. by 2027.

Americans are three times more likely

See Drug Free, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Who's in Control?

Dear Editor,

A recent critic of my letter to the editor titled "Happy Now?" made a claim that, apparently, we shouldn't fret over Trump being president because God has everything under control. Consider me unconvinced. With her argument, the writer holds views of theology quite different from those of the majority of our country's Founding Fathers. As Deists, they saw God as a clockmaker, who winds his device up, starts it and steps aside, letting the universe run itself according to natural law, at least until the spring winds down.

Influenced by the Enlightenment movement of the 17th and 18th centuries, our Founders' perception of the world relied on human reasoning and scientific thinking, unlike so many people in today's America. They rejected the Biblical stories of miracles as myth. Thomas Jefferson went so far as to excise from his Bible any references to miracles.

Another problem I see with the writer's position, suggestive of predestination, puts into question the idea of whether God was taking a nap while the Nazis created their evil or while the Black Death decimated much of Europe. Theologians have been struggling for centuries with the existence of "bad stuff" happening under the control of an omniscient, all-powerful "good" God. It seems you must either accept that God is not in control, or that God is at best neutral with respect to issues of morality. Both ideas can be found in Deism.

To quote Reinhold Niebuhr, American theologian, Christian, and intellectual, "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." It appears my critic stopped reading after the first comma.

See Schilling, page 5A

Wreaths Across America

Dear Editor,

I was surprised to see Christmas decorations for sale in a local store when August is not over yet! But the display prompted me to get my donation to Wreaths Across America in the mail.

Wreaths Across America is an event where volunteers place Christmas wreaths on every grave site in Arlington National Cemetery during the Christmas Season. There are also local programs in many cities, so be sure to check the website.

Wreaths are made possible with a \$15 donation sent to: Wreaths Across America; P.O. Box 249; Columbia Falls, ME 04622.

Victory McVay

Letters to the Editor

Mistranslated Hebrew

Dear Editor,

In response to and support of the author of "To Hell with Hell" from the Aug. 22 issue:

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History and modern research show that the majority of them exist today, maybe with a name change, but they are the same people.

As to hell, in Hebrew (גיהנום), the doctrine of "everlasting punishment in hell" is founded upon a combination of mistranslations and misinterpretations of the following Hebrew and Greek words:

Mistranslations of the Hebrew word Sheol, and the Greek words Hades, Tartarus, and Gehenna, to mean hell.

Mistranslations of the Hebrew word owlam, and the Greek words aion and aionios, to mean forever or everlasting when relating to God's judgment of unbelievers and fallen angels.

All versions of the Bible except for these three, the Latin Vulgate, the KJV and the NKJV, reject any notion of hell occurring in the original Hebrew Manuscripts of the Old Testament. Also, please especially note that the translators of the Jewish Publication Society Bible and the Tanakh/The Complete Jewish Bible disagree with the Latin Vulgate, the KJV and the NKJV by making no mention of hell whatsoever in their Bibles. If the Jews, who are experts in their own Hebrew language, do not include hell in their Bibles, then this further confirms that there is not a single word that means hell in the Hebrew Manuscripts of the Old Testament.

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Jerome mistranslated as many as four different words to mean hell. These words are one

See Smith, page 5A

Debt Reduction

Dear Editor,

Pretty interesting that TVA got its start by forcing people off their land to build dams to sell electricity. Now, it might lead to forcing people from their homes because the homeowner can't afford to buy their electricity. All because the TVA wants to pay down their debt.

In the meantime, I'll be looking for someone to help me pay down my debt.

Dan Payne

Better Times Are Coming

After graduation, Paul worked around his Dad's farm for a couple of months and then left to attend college at the University of Arkansas. He had been offered a scholarship to play baseball for the Razorbacks. Back in those days, student athletes were allowed to practice more than present day athletes. So, the Arkansas baseball team held late summer baseball practices. Paul was exposed to some really good pitching that he was able to handle. The young man was left-handed and was able to hit the best pitchers on the team.

However, there was a young man present who had recently left Arkansas because he had received an invitation to try out with the St. Louis Cardinals. This lefty pitcher had a wicked curve ball and slider. The fellow's fast ball approached 100 mph, and trying as much as possible, Paul could not connect with this fellow's pitches. Just when he thought he'd catch up to a fast ball, Paul would receive a curve ball. Then, even though Paul knew it was coming, the fellow's slider would always strike him out. He would say, "I knew the slider was coming and it was always in the dirt, but I couldn't help it. I would always swing at the last pitch."

So, by the end of fall practice, Paul was really discouraged. He couldn't get a hit off this guy. On top of his batting problems, Paul was worried about his girlfriend back at home. Paul just knew his old nemesis was going to steal his gal. On top of everything else was the fact that he was bored. The young man was in a new town and didn't know anyone except those other folks on the team. He had no idea about what he should study, so Paul was just taking core classes. In essence, the young man was discouraged, lonely and confused about his future. So, he left Arkansas and went home to North Alabama.

Paul's father, Columbus, cried like a baby when his son came home from college. But soon, things got back to normal for the young man. He found a job at a textile mill where he worked during the week and played baseball on the mill's team on weekends. Paul also loved basketball and soon landed a job as a basketball referee for local high school games. This job soon landed him in hot water, however. Paul's old high school team, Phil Campbell, was playing their arch rival, Hackleburgh. Paul's brother, Bud, played for Phil Campbell, as did many of his younger friends.

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



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See Cummings, page 5A

Chamber of Commerce

For this week's article, I would like to highlight a few of our Chamber members and some of their upcoming events.

I'd like to invite everyone to attend the one-year anniversary celebration for Melissa's Custom Cakes. Plan on joining us for lots of goodies and a Ribbon Cutting ceremony on Thursday, Sept. 6, at 11 a.m. Bakery owner Melissa Roberts has over 22 years of experience decorating and baking cakes, along with other delicious treats. Located just off the square, the business address is 102 A Cleveland Street.

There are two notable events taking place on Saturday, Sept. 8, that I'd like to highlight. Chamber member Fellowship of the Hills church will be presenting their Fourth Annual "Free Family Movie Night - Under the Stars." Festivities will run from 2 p.m. through 10 p.m. at Meeks Park in Blairsville. This free family event will have a bounce house, popcorn and BBQ.

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Black Bears

Have you seen black bears this year? There have been more stories than usual about bears being around. Let's talk about what to do if you see a bear and the steps that you can take to do your part to make sure that you aren't Goldilocks waking up and seeing bears everywhere.

Firstly, it's important to remember that we live in an area with copious amounts of national forest. That means black bears are out there. Hopefully, though, if you encounter one, you'll know what to do or how to make your space less attractive to them. Bears will typically live eight to 15 years. The females can weigh up to 300 pounds and the males over 500 pounds. The females will give birth in their den in late January. Those cubs will stay with the mother until the following spring when she kicks them out.

Bears are omnivores, meaning that they eat whatever is easily available depending on the time of year. Their natural diet is berries, fruits, acorns, grasses, insects, and even mammals. Bears can be attracted by the smell of human food if there is not much natural food available for them. Bears are naturally afraid of humans. However, bears that have been feeding on human food lose their natural fear of people and become a danger. Bears will usually remain in an area where food is readily available, so the best way to make sure that bears don't move into your backyard is to remove the sources of food.

Never feed bears either intentionally or unintentionally. They will learn where food is available and become a nuisance for you. Make sure that your garbage is in a place that they can't reach. That means leaving it inside the garage, or if you're out camping, hoisting your trash in the air or putting it in a bear proof trash can. Bird feeders can attract bears because of the high-calorie content in bird feed. Bring your bird feeders in when bears are active. Don't leave pet food out. Just give your outdoor pets enough food for one feeding. If you have a grill, clean and store it after use. Bears will be attracted by the smell of your grill, so keep it out of reach for them. And finally, let your neighbors know if you see a bear so that they can take precautions, too.

Most bears are not aggressive, unless they have been fed by humans before. Bear relocation is usually not an effective control option. Bears that are relocated might be moved to an area that another bear has already claimed, leading to territorial fights, or the bear may try to return to its home and be struck by a vehicle. Relocation is a last resort.

If you do encounter a bear in the open,

See Williams, page 5A

UGA extension watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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