



## Paris... continued from Page 4A

der. Then when they go back to their main office, they shred everything again. So, your sensitive documents are shredded twice and then they are baled into large bales. These bales of shredded paper are then recycled.

**Q. Why can't we have an Electronics Recycling and Document Destruction event quarterly or even twice a year?**

A. The two companies

## Chamber... continued from Page 4A

slowdown, they would be able to maintain and/or grow their businesses. That county would be able to provide plenty of jobs for anyone that wanted to work. Its health care system should be highly rated with a 4 - 5 star rating and could expand to meet the needs of a changing population. There would be a school system that had one of the highest graduation rates in the state and is able to provide their students with what they need to be successful and to thrive. We should emulate a county that has leaders that communicate and collaborate well together and is forward-thinking while keeping the tax rate at one of the lowest in the state. The perfect county would be safe and have a low crime rate, and the first responders would genuinely care about the residents they are protecting. The local churches would

that come and provide this service do so for free. They are unable to do this more than once a year as a general rule.

**Q. Is the county still accepting items for recycling at the Transfer Station?**

A. Absolutely. We hope as many of you as possible are able to recycle your newspapers and most any kind of paper, corrugated cardboard, and your #1 and #2 plastic bottles and glass jars.

freely meet to discuss ways to spread the Word. And while we are searching for that perfect county, it would be fabulous if it had outdoor activities where families could hike trails, chase waterfalls, and swim in crystal clear lakes. It would also be important for this county to preserve its heritage and work to pass it down to future generations.

Wait a minute. As I look for this perfect community, I only have to look out my back window. As I sit and watch the leaves start to change, or drive through historic downtown to one of our favorite restaurants, or visit Vogel State Park, it's very easy to see that Blairsville-Union County is very unique and the perfect county. I'm very blessed to call it home, and you should be, too.

Life is Better in Blairsville.

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tion meeting and would hear my comments about the actions of the Board at the Public Hearing. I was disappointed in the citizen turnout and hope more citizens will attend BOE meetings in the future.

For more people to know about the actions of the School Board, the following is the text of my public comment presented at the BOE meeting:

*I am speaking tonight about the board actions at the August 31, 2023, Public Hearing on the increase in millage rate for the school property tax.*

*It is necessary to understand what a public hearing is and why they are held. I searched the web and found a definition of public hearings at the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) website. It states "Public hearings allow citizens to express opinions on matters of public concern."*

*It points out one reason for public hearings is for setting property tax millage and this is mandated by law.*

*The definition continues with "Hearings, whether required or voluntary, are called by the governing authority in order to gather facts related to proposed actions, gauge public opinion, or permit citizens to 'blow off steam.'" The action of blowing off steam is like a pressure cooker; you open the vent to allow the steam to escape. The board opens the vent, but then immediately closes it, allowing the steam to build back up.*

*The definition then continues, "Merely giving citizens an opportunity to express their opinions demonstrates their*

*concern for citizens views." Does the board do this? No, you showed the opposite, a complete disdain for the citizens' views. There were four or five other citizens who had signed up to speak and were not allowed to speak. At three minutes each, this would have added 12 or 15 minutes to the meeting. You the board, apparently, could not spend 15 additional minutes to allow the citizens to "blow off steam." Instead, you angered the citizens by not allowing them to speak.*

*Superintendent Hill in an article in the North Georgia News attributed the actions of the board in limiting the number of speakers to legal advice. This bad legal advice resulted in effectively censoring the citizens instead of "demonstrating concern for citizens views." If Mr. Hill and the Board understood the purpose of a public hearing, they would have disregarded this bad legal advice.*

*The bad advice was followed and the steam built back up. If the Board understood human psychology, the Board would have spent an additional 15 minutes in the meeting, allowed some steam to bleed off by allowing the additional speakers their turns, and then proceeded to vote to increase the millage rate.*

*I believe the Board owes an apology to the citizens of Union County for their actions at the August 31 Public Hearing. The Board is aware the elections are coming and their actions will have impact in the them.*

Thank you.

**Vincent Peterson**

## Shirkey... continued from Page 4A

tion costs, and building up our manufacturing capabilities. Are these the goals to make America strong again? YES.

What is counterproductive to these goals is name-calling and misinformation. These actions divide Americans and are unproductive in making our economy, health care and government strong.

What's important in making positive steps towards these goals is to be sure your elected representatives understand what your priorities are. Unfortunately, Pharmaceutical, Health Care and Oil Companies spent almost \$500 million in the past year on lob-

bing efforts to influence our government representatives. This must stop!

We all have concerns as to whether President Biden and Congress are doing all they can to strengthen the country. Success will only come with being reasonable, listening to each other and compromise. The theatrics of calling people names or distorting facts will only take us down a path of weakness.

Let your voice be heard by your government representatives to enable them to make productive decisions about the future we want.

**Kristie Shirkey**

## Gardner... continued from Page 4A

Nursing Facility. Once again, the unknown, will my brother be in good hands? The answer, most definitely YES. Chatuge SNF is a family of many families. From Admissions, RNs, CNAs, PT, even the lead Administrator was involved in his care. Each and every one of you made us feel like part of the family. He is now home with aid from another fantastic Home Health Care facility out of Union County.

My husband and I live in a small beach town in South Florida - yes, a small town, with a rapid increase of growth within the County. Changing times are everywhere! We have been coming to Towns County for over 30 years; it feels like home away from home. I must say, with the experience we encountered this summer, we have a new extended family and a great appreciation for the medical care in Towns and Union Coun-

ty. If I may say, please keep moving forward with the small-town feel of family comes first. Bless you all, YOU know who you are, and thank you ALL for what you do for our community.

**Polly Gardner**

## White...

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or fail. As a fan of small, family-owned businesses, I wholeheartedly support the writer's suggestion. We really need the federal government to stop penalizing investors and entrepreneurs with burdensome taxes and regulations that only hinder and prohibit growth.

The federal government should also terminate the pandemic-induced freebies and get people back to work to staff our local retail establishments!

**Greg C. White**

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

ten over the years concerned John. There are people in my family that revere him for being larger than life. Yet, others reviled him.

The reason for the disdain concerned an event that happened around 1917. John was married to Martha Pace and raised 8 kids in Alabama. When his youngest child became a teenager John left his wife and family to move to Missouri with another woman. These were hard times. My 2X Great Grandmother Martha lost her husband. Then her youngest son was accidentally killed and another son left for WWI and she never fully recovered from these events. I think most of the family never forgave John for abandoning them, although he did try to make things right with them. However, he was only close to one son afterward. That son happened to be my great grandfather Lon.

About 1935, close to his birthday, John came back for one last visit. I understand things were pretty tense. The family was still hurting. But, Lon loved his Dad. So, everyone pitched in and bought him some gifts. My Aunt Mable sewed each and every gift into the legs of a brand-new pair of overalls. John was so pleased with the overalls he decided to try them on. But he could not get his legs into them due to the gifts. He reached into the legs of the overalls six times to

pull out the gifts. Papa said that each time a gift came out Big Papa would let out a big laugh. Each laugh reminded him that his son still loved him.

## Elias...

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here are some suggestions. How about term limits? The president can serve for only two terms, yet senators and representatives can serve for life. it's been said that older people are wiser, but that's not always true. Younger people can bring new ideas to the table.

How about writing about other Republicans? Some are very good and positive and they focus on the American people. You could start by writing about them. They are not hard to find. Just please do not begin with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. He is in the same camp as Trump with his "all about me" attitude.

When Trump is convicted, he will once again make a lot of money. He will have time to write his book that should be called "Witch Hunt." It will probably make the top-seller list and he could pay his lawyers.

Mr. Clyde, until next time, you can do it right.

**Fred Elias**

## Fowler...

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tempted to treat technology like AI as though it is godlike. That's how someone finds comfort in the made-up words of ChatGPT.

Good news! You can still find comfort in God's design for being human: "In Him we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:28). You can tap superintelligence when you "have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him" (Col. 3:10).

AI will change our lives for better and for worse probably sooner than later. But you can take comfort in knowing that you are made in the image of God. You are renewed by faith in the Lord Jesus, the Shepherd of your soul. AI can't change that.

## Williams...

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and has a north, east, north-east, or northwest facing aspect. Ginseng must be grown in the shade. About 75% shade is what is needed. Hardwoods are better than pine. Some indicator plants to look for are mayapple, bloodroot, trilliums, foam flower, ferns, and cohosh. When planting seeds keep in mind that they may take two or more years to germinate. Once plants are growing it can take 8+ years before they reach harvest age. Ginseng can be a valuable crop, but it's best to temper expectations because there is a lot that can go wrong in 8+ years. Wildlife damage, washout, theft, diseases, and insects can all take their toll.

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

## Ashurst...

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Or we may assume that we have fantastic answers to their problems. We enter into another person's territory that solely belongs to God and to the person with the problem. God has a specific plan for that person, and He is perfectly capable of assisting the person without our interference.

Secondly, there is the danger of the situation backfiring. What happens when our advice backfires in our friend's life? "Hello, Houston, we have a problem." In our hands we now have an outraged friend, in addition to the actual backfiring of the problem. All of this can escalate beyond our craziest imagination—all because we ceased asking ourselves, "Whose problem is it?"

It's wonderful when we allow our friend to vent out the problem with us, but beware of actually attempting to solve the problem.

## Dyer...

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and cooking safety, visit [www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org).

For fire safety fun for kids, visit [www.sparky.org](http://www.sparky.org). Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~