

Opinions

Mindfulness II

In all relationships, we will sooner or later encounter a friend who needs to unload his or her burdens. The individual may be suffering from severe symptoms of depression, stress, or anxiety. The person needs our undivided attention to hear their burdens – this is called Mindfulness.

Mindfulness is living in the moment, ever mindful of whom we are with at the time. When we give our full attention to such a person, then we are giving them one of the highest known compliments... ourself.

Whatever the friend is saying or doing, we need to put our personal agenda on hold. The friend becomes our center of attention as we are drawn into his or her world.

Our senses connect to the person in a wonderful, loving way. The five senses can connect us to what our friend is going through – bad or good.

Listening wholeheartedly to our friend means our not getting lost in our own situation, and attentive listening does require effort because our mind may be running in all kinds of directions.

However, if it does wander off the situation of our friend, don't panic – the mountains aren't going to shake, the streams aren't going to dry up, and Atlanta traffic at 5 p.m. isn't going to become simpler – life will go on.

When you and I have wandering minds during a conversation, we are having a normal occurrence. Simply, rein in your thoughts and get back into the present sphere with your friend. Mindfulness requires patience.

We need to treat our friend in a way that we'd like to be treated. Try putting yourself in their shoes. When our whole being is involved in another person's whole being, then we are being truly mindful in its truest sense.

"I love you not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me." (Roy Croft)

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



The Story of You

Actor Cole Hauser joined Morgan Freeman in making the film noir, "The Minute You Wake Up Dead" (2022). Critics mostly panned the movie, which is surprising given the star power of these two.

In one scene Hauser's character says, "You know what I've never understood about religion? ... Are we sinners because we sin, or do we sin because we're born sinners?"

"And if it's the latter, then what right does God have to judge us?" The other person says, "If you ever figure it out, let me know."

The question is an attempt at logic, but it's a red herring. It distracts with a false conclusion and questions God's character as flawed and unjust. Also, isn't there something a trifle presumptuous about the creature questioning the Creator's "rights"? The question fails to consider the whole story of the world. Just to let you know, we can "figure it out" by challenging the premise of the question: Whether sin or sinner comes first doesn't change God's justice and offer of mercy.

It helps to look at the grand arc of the Biblical narrative. You might think of the story as having chapters: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration. Hauser's question does not look beyond the Fall, which explains why the world suffers like it does. By the way, this may be the easiest chapter of the story to illustrate. Movies, like this one, portray greed, deception, and murder in wincing detail. The daily news tells of real crime, disasters, and death. We experience good and evil, right and wrong.

But God has not left you without hope. A personal solution has always existed. The same passage that says, "all have sinned" goes on to explain that we are "justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus... so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:23-26). That, friend, is good news! God is a just judge. In mercy, He offers to justify you by faith and render you blameless. In the divine courtroom, God the Son is your advocate. He carried out your sentence on the cross. This is the Redeption chapter of the story. The minute you wake up dead, you are absent from the body, at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. The names and numbers of highways and the GDOT highways confuse us. Could you explain it better?

A. Basically, there are two main state managed highways that bisect Union County and Blairsville in four directions. The North and South highway is considered US 19/129 or State Route (GA SR 11). It is also known as the Murphy Highway and the Jack C Lance Sr Hwy, going North. Going South, it is known as Gainesville Highway. When referring to crossing the mountain, it is sometimes called Neal (s) Gap, which is the name of the gap at the top of the mountain where Mountain Crossings or the Walasi Yi Center is located. The East and West Highway is referred to mostly now as Hwy State Route (GA SR 515). However, it is also US Hwy 76 and SR 2. Going East, you might hear it called the Young Harris Highway, but the total corridor is now mostly considered SR Highway 515.

An aside, the stone building that is now Mountain Crossings was built in the '30s by the Civilian Conservation Corps. My sisters use to wait tables there back in the '50s when it was a restaurant run by Bonnel and Roma Akins. (parents of Milton, Larry and George Akins)

Q. Are there any other state highways in Union County?

A. There are a few other highways built and maintained by the State of Georgia (state routes). One is Highway 325 also known as Nottely Dam Road and it runs from Highway 515 West to US 19/129 North, going across Nottely Dam on the North end of Lake Nottely at Poteete's Store. Then there is Highway 180 that goes from Suches to Brasstown Bald, with a short portion of this highway running in conjunction with the Gainesville Highway. Also, in Suches there is GA SR 60 which runs from the Fanning County line and goes all the way to the Lumpkin County Line. Then there is US Route 348, also known as Richard Russell Scenic Highway, which turns South off of SR 180 then goes across Hogpen Gap to the White County line. There is then a short portion of state highway going up to Brasstown Bald called GA SR 180 Spur.

Q. What is the difference in a State Route (SR) and a US Highway (Federal Highway) and how do we know the dif-

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



See Fowler, page 5A

See Paris, page 5A

Left's Latest Lie

The Left routinely spreads malicious lies to advance their destructive agenda. Yet this time around, their propaganda involves a tragedy in our Peach State.

Over the past few days, liberal politicians and the left-wing media have circulated a false narrative about a young Georgia mother, Amber Thurman. As you may know, Amber passed away in 2022 from an infection following a chemical abortion.

Disturbingly, Democrats – including Vice President Kamala Harris – are exploiting this tragedy to push their radical pro-abortion agenda. They've erroneously claimed that Georgia's pro-life laws are responsible for Amber's death.

Here's the truth: A chemical abortion killed Amber – not a pro-life law.

According to reports, Amber obtained the chemical abortion pill regimen, which consists of the drugs mifepristone and misoprostol, from

See Clyde, page 5A

United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde



Chamber of Commerce

As many of you may have heard, we postponed the Sporting Clays Tournament due to last week's storm. The new date is Monday, October 28th. If you have not registered as a station sponsor or purchased your raffle tickets, please contact Savannah at the Chamber office today at 706-745-5789.

We hope everyone stayed safe during the storm and pray for a quick recovery for those affected. Many communities around us were impacted, and we encourage everyone who can to help them recover.

Do not forget to check the Chamber website for upcoming events and deadlines. We are looking forward to Boo Bash, the parades, Non-Profit Board Training, the Young Professionals breakfast, and the Tour of Trees. Be sure not to miss these exciting events!

Please keep those impacted by the storm in your thoughts and prayers.

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President Steve Rowe



Letters to the Editor

Better Than This

Dear Editor,
I drove by a "I'm Voting For The Felon" yard sign recently. Initially, I was appalled that someone could be so flippant about such a flawed candidate with a growing criminal record and a disastrous first term. My second thought was, well, if their beliefs and values align with a 34x convicted felon who was also found liable for sexual assault and is a proven speaker of untruths, then by all means, vote for someone with whom you so closely relate!

I find it troubling that I have heard from several people who are afraid to wear their "blue" leaning T-shirts or put a Harris-Walz sign in their yard, or a sticker on their car, for fear of putting themselves and their home/family in harm's way, or getting their cars keyed or tires

See LeGros, page 5A

Lead Me to Truth

Dear Editor,
I have written many letters to the editor – in my head – rebutting some of the insane political statements made by other letter writers. But I know they wouldn't listen anyway, so why waste my time?

Instead, I now challenge readers of both political parties to try this for three weeks: Every day, pray this one line, "Lord, lead me to the truth." Every day.

Let's see what happens.

Catherine Harper

Turn Over the Reins

Dear Editor,
Anyone who makes a habit of reading the North Georgia News knows that there is no lack of opinions from those who, week in and week out, make contributions in the form of Letters to the Editor. Especially in these times, a large percentage of these letters deal with the political landscape, and many tend to express their points of view with great passion. The truth be known, the current state of American politics is so emotionally charged and so complex in terms of competing perspectives – each with their own narrative – that no single letter to the editor can possibly do justice to addressing the complexities that make up the current political landscape. In this environment, more often than not, what is contained in these letters tends to come off more like a kind of "sniper fire" rather than a reasoned explication of the current body politic.

Now with this said, I do want to offer a way forward which is not complicated, is easily understood, and can actually be fully expressed

See Wilson page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Property Tax Assessment Cap

Dear Editor,
A property tax assessment cap at a maximum of 3% per annum addresses only one half of the situation in which homeowners find themselves. A similar cap is needed on the millage rate. Otherwise, any shortfall a county faces due to the assessment cap can (and likely will) be worked around by bumping the millage rate as deemed necessary.

Best Regards,
Roger Beal

Unsung Heroes

Dear Editor,
I am sending this to say a very special "thank you so much" to very special people who saved my life. These are people that rarely hear thank you and are all too often taken for granted. I am talking about all the caregivers, CNAs, RNs, physical therapists, custodians, administrative, activities directors, dieticians, transport staff and all the people that truly give from their hearts every single day, 24/7 at Union County Nursing Home.

Each and every one of these wonderful people go above and beyond to care for the residents. I never heard a raised voice or an unkind word no matter the provocation. Each resident is treated with love, respect and compassion. These folks are truly angels in disguise that go about their days dedicated to excellence in performance and kindness in every word and gesture.

So, I would like to suggest that if you encounter any of these people in your day to day lives, take a moment to thank them for their service; you never know when you or someone you love will be blessed by their tender, loving care. Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Marshall

"Democracy"

Dear Editor,
All over the news these days, candidates are hollering that a vote for the other candidate will end democracy as we know it. I certainly hope so but not for the reasons that you might think. Our founders abhorred the idea of a democracy, which is why our country was founded in the Constitution as a Republic. Article 4, Section 4 of the Constitution states: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence." In fact, the

See Brown, page 5A

Things We Take for Granted

We all have things in life that we take for granted. These items have always been around and we assume they will always be around. For example, I remember a little school house I attended. It was the same school my Dad attended as a boy. My second-grade teacher was my Grandfather's cousin. When she called me by both my first and second name, I knew I was in trouble. I have a lot of fond memories of that school house, and now it is in a state of decay.

I remember a little white church house where the only means of keeping cool were two ceiling fans and opening the windows. I remember dinners on the ground and all day singings. I remember going to singing schools and revival meetings. At that time there was only one generation of Cummings buried at the cemetery. Now, the church is a brick building with central air and heat and there are four generations of my relatives buried in the cemetery.

As a little boy some of my fondest memories were spent in the woods with my Papa. For example, we spent many a fall afternoon wandering the woods around his farm picking up Buckeyes. I was told they were good luck and could be carried in your pocket. Then when you were fishing and needed a little good luck, the Buckeye could be rubbed between your fingers to increase your chances of landing a nice fish. More than one of my Uncles relied upon Buckeyes to help them in this manner, and they were the best fishermen I knew.

This habit of picking up Buckeyes in the fall has carried over into my adult life. Each year shortly after Labor Day I visit the woods to pick up Buckeyes. I can't help myself when I find them, I usually fill my pockets with them. A few weeks ago Milton Bradly, Tom Starrett, Chris Urbaniak and I found ourselves on a shelf close to the top of Buzzard Roost Ridge. We were admiring a bear tree which had been scarred by bears marking their territory. The talk turned toward collecting Buckeyes, and Milton reminded me that there was a large one down at the shelf next to a place called the Hot Hole by local hunters. According to legend the hole is a vent in the earth where hot air used to escape. The air is no longer hot, and now you can build a fire near the entrance to the hole in the ground and the smoke will be sucked into the cave and disappear.

After we had examined this Hot Hole we found the Buckeye Tree and began picking up the brown nuts. I nearly had a pocketful when Tom hollered for us to come look. We walked over and he explained that he'd found a Buckeye

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Ladybugs

Ladybugs are moving inside at this time of year. Let's talk about where they came from and what you can do to try and get rid of them.

Most of the time the ladybugs that move inside to hibernate through the winter are Asian ladybugs. I often am asked if the government is releasing Asian ladybugs and that's why they are in their house. The government does not currently release Asian ladybugs. The US Department of Agriculture did release Asian ladybugs during the 1960s to the 1990s. Ladybugs are beneficial insects because they eat many soft-bodied insects that are pests. They were released so that apple and pecan growers would not need to use as many insecticides. Georgia is one of the states where they were released. However, now Asian ladybugs are found in states that did not have releases.

Asian Ladybugs look very similar to our native ladybugs. Females usually have several multiple spots, while the males have fewer spots. Their color can range from tan to orange to red. The best way to tell them about from our natives is that they have a dark M or W (depending on which side you look at them) on the back of their head. Asian ladybugs don't have very many natural predators in the US. That means they can spread very easily. It makes them good at controlling aphids on plants outdoors, but makes them a nuisance in the fall and early spring.

In the fall, many of them will try to make their way inside. Once a couple get in, it's hard to keep more out. Ladybugs will use pheromones to let other ladybugs know that they've found a good spot to overwinter. Therefore, you usually won't see just a couple, but dozens or even hundreds. They usually will congregate on the sunny side of a building. Buildings that have light and dark contrasting colors on the outside will be more attractive to them. Older buildings are more attractive too because they will leak more heat out.

Ladybugs don't injure people. They also don't reproduce indoors. They won't attack wood, food, or clothing. They can secrete a yellow substance when disturbed. The yellow secretion smells bad and can stain. They use the yellow stuff as a defense mechanism against predators.

So the big question is, how do you get rid of them? If they are inside a simple method is to just vacuum them up and then throw them in the trash. Sealing cracks around doors or windows is a good way to keep them from entering in the first place. Ladybugs are small, so they can use

See Williams, page 5A

Watching and Working Jacob Williams



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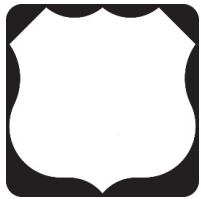
Paris... continued from Page 4A

ference? A. In most cases, a US Highway is funded by the Federal Government, although the state has to pitch in a certain percentage on projects and maintenance. Whereas a State Route (SR) is funded and maintained by the State of Georgia.

Usually, you cannot tell the difference in the highway except by the type of signage that is used. The signage for a US Highway is shown by the picture below and the highway number is inserted in the middle. All State Routes are identified as the State Route number in an outline of the State of Georgia as shown below.



State Route



US Highway

Q. Do you have the distances of the highways here in Union County?

- US Highway 19/129 South (Gainesville Hwy) = 13.32 miles
- US Highway 19/129 North (Murphy Hwy) = 10.65 miles
- US Highway 19/129 (Glenn Gooch Bypass) = .86 miles
- SR 515 (Towards Blue Ridge) = 9.39 miles
- SR 515 (Towards Young Harris) = 6.28 miles
- SR 180 (SR 60 in Suches to Fannin County line) = 18.36 miles
- SR 180 Spur (Up to Brasstown Bald) = 0.7 miles
- SR 60 (Fannin Co to Lumpkin Co in Suches) = 10.57 miles
- SR 348 (Richard Russell Scenic Highway from SR 180 to White County line) = 7.01 miles
- SR 325 (Hwy 515 to US 19/129) = 11.09 miles
- Total State Highways = 100.09 miles
- Total County Paved = 440.07 miles
- Total County Gravel = 105.64
- Total County = 545.71
- Private Roads = 498.63 miles

LeGros... continued from Page 4A

slashed. Apparently, these are valid concerns, some of which actually happened during the last election cycle. Really, MAGA folks, is this the reputation you want for our town? News Flash: you don't own Union County! Is this reputation something to be proud of? I think not. What good comes from any of it? That didn't change anyone's vote and only sets a negative tone for our charming town. I suppose every place has a disturbing underbelly, even Blairsville.

I see Trump signs all over the place, and while I vehemently reject everything he represents, I respect others' rights to show their support for their candidate and would never vandalize to show my opposition. A couple of my Harris-Walz signs have mysteriously disappeared... wonder who mighta done that? Blairsville, we are better than this. Just because you are voting for a felon doesn't mean you have to act like one. As for me, I will be voting for the Prosecutor! Respectfully submitted, **Trish LeGros**

Wilson... continued from Page 4A

in the space of a letter to the editor. So, here is my suggestion. The men have held the reins of power since the founding of the United States, and men have managed to create one big mess of things – over and over. Therefore, I propose that we turn the levers of political power over to the women. My guess is that, in a spirit of cooperation, they could clean up this mess in pretty short order. My guess is that they would fairly quickly come to conclusions (policies, rules of law, etc.) grounded in cooperation and which are intended to foster the common good and which would create a culture where their children and chil-

dren's children could live in peace and (with a tip of the hat to Thomas Jefferson) engage in the pursuit of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that is spoken of in the Declaration of Independence. That's my suggestion, and it only took about 225 words to say it. Viola! Problem solved. I mean, come on guys, we have to admit that we are not good at this thing we call governing in that we just seem to wind up wrestling in a mud pit. I'm pretty sure that, if given half a chance, the women could straighten all of this out in pretty short order. **Frank F. Wilson**

Brown... continued from Page 4A

term democracy is not found in either the Declaration of Independence or the U.S. Constitution. Democracy when it is broken down is that majority wins. At first glance, you might applaud this. I do not. Another translation would be mob rule. A beautiful example of this was given by the president of Hillsdale College's Constitution class (free online) where he uses a classroom to give this illustration. Let's say there is a teacher with 20 students. There is one student in the class named "Jimmy." On the first day of class, the teacher decides to gather the class and tells Jimmy that he is going to pay for everyone's meal regardless of whether he can afford it. Jimmy rightly objects to this. So the teacher puts it to a vote. Nineteen students and the teacher vote that Jimmy should pay for their meals. 20 to 1. Majority rules! In a Republic form of government, an individual's rights have a higher importance than the majority rule. In fact, an individual's personal right takes precedence over almost anything else. So Jimmy cannot be made to take everyone to lunch but, if he so chooses, can offer to take them to lunch. If the government can take something of yours without your permission with or without fair compensation, it is not a republic but a dictatorship.

An individual's right should be held in the highest regard. Your rights are not allowed to infringe on someone else's right. With rights comes two things that are chained to that – responsibility and consequences. You are to use your rights responsibly and, after exercising those rights, you are responsible for those consequences. Take the latest item in the news over the last year or two – Student Loans. You have the right to apply for a student loan. You have the right to accept a student loan if you are able to obtain one. You have the responsibility to make the payments that you agreed to when you took the loan. If you don't pay the loan back, then you have the consequence of your paycheck being garnished, your tax refund intercepted, or it taken from your checking account. A former WSB radio host illustrated the idea of democracy as well by using two wolves and a sheep deciding what to eat for dinner. Mutton anyone? So the next time you hear someone call the United States a democracy, they do not understand the principles of the Constitution or the country. Some parties desire mob rule for their own benefit because then your individual rights are demoted to being overrun by whoever is in charge. **Michael Brown**

Blairsville Cruisers Members Meeting rescheduled to October 3rd

The originally scheduled Membership meeting was rained out Last Thursday September 26th. This important meeting is rescheduled for Thursday, October 3rd. The meeting is preceded by a pot luck supper at 6 PM in the pavilion of the Union County Farmers Market. Meeting follows at 6:30 PM.

All members are urged to attend. Agenda items include plans for the Sorghum Festival, The Salute to Veterans Car Show, The Christmas party and other club business. Guests are welcome if interested in learning about joining the Blairsville cruisers Car Club. Please bring a dish to share and plan to be finished by 7:30 or earlier. See you there!

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

and reached to pick it up. When his hand was about a foot from the nut he noticed a Rattlesnake right next to the Buckeye. Fortunately for Tom, it was a cool day and the snake was lethargic and moving slow. We soon made our way back to the top of the mountain to the Trail and walked back toward the parking lot on Brass-town Bald. But we still had stories to tell. Along the way we found the "Harold Tree," which is an American Chestnut still producing nuts. Harold Dyer and I found the tree many years ago and took samples to determine its authenticity. It was named the Harold Tree in honor of my friend.

Next, we came upon a big log where Milton had once killed a hog while hunting. He told us about the hunt and how he'd processed the animal. Then he hung the meat in the tree and walked out to his truck. He had to get to a Christmas Party by a certain time and came back the next morning to retrieve his quarry. These stories and memories all came from good and honest people that made my life happier. What I am trying to say is make sure you are thankful for people and things in your life. Because life changes so fast those people and things could be a memory tomorrow.

Clyde... continued from Page 4A

a clinic in North Carolina. After taking the abortion drugs, she faced serious complications and went to the hospital due to her worsening symptoms. The infection and issues caused by taking mifepristone and misoprostol required both antibiotics and surgery. Tragically, Amber did not survive the surgery. Keep in mind, the Left falsely promises that these abortion pills are safe. In fact, Planned Parenthood touts that abortion medication is "safer than Tylenol." Folks, Amber Thurman's heartbreaking death was preventable – but it had absolutely nothing to do with our state's pro-life protections. Had Amber not taken these

harmful abortion drugs, she – and the two precious lives she was carrying – would be with us today. The truth just doesn't fit the Left's radical narrative. That's why they shamelessly fabricate stories and weaponize the murder of unborn children to score political points and mislead the American people. Desperate, despicable, and downright dangerous. Please know that I remain an unapologetic champion of life in Congress. After all, as outlined in our nation's birth certificate – the Declaration of Independence – our first and most fundamental right is the right to LIFE!

Williams... continued from Page 4A

a crack that's 1/8th of an inch. There are ladybug traps that use black light to attract them. These can be effective at capturing ones that have already entered, especially if you use it in a dark space, like a closet or attic. If you have a serious infestation, it's best to call a pest control company. Ladybugs can be a nuisance inside the house, but remember that they are beneficial to farmers and gardeners. If you have questions about ladybugs contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Fowler... continued from Page 4A

This movie is a foul story of mayhem and pain. I cannot recommend it. I do recommend the whole story as told in the Bible. "The true story of the world," writes Chesterton, "must be told by somebody to somebody else... It met the mythological search for romance by being a story and the philosophical search for truth by being a true story." Do you believe it? If so, that makes it the story of you. www.mountainchristian.net

Your Patriot Reflection



A Few Good Men, or Women

We're in need of a few good men and women in our government. You might be saying, "But we do have a few good men and women!" Maybe we should go a step further: We need good men and women in government who have the best interest of all in mind as they govern, not their own interest. Those who will lead with virtue and morality, not political or selfish aspirations. William Penn does a better job explaining than we can. He said, "Governments, like clocks, go from the motion men give them; and as governments are made and moved by men, so by them they are ruined too. Wherefore governments rather depend upon men than men upon governments. Let men be good and the government cannot be bad...But if men be bad they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their turn...Though good laws do well, good men do better; for good laws may lack good men and be abolished or invaded by ill men; but good men will never lack good laws nor allow bad ones." We believe you would agree with me that a few good men and women are desperately needed today in our government. A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www.joshuaswarriors.org.