

**Paris... continued from Page 4A**

**SPLOST and ESPLOST, do you support the school sales tax that will come to a vote this year?**

A. Absolutely I will support it. The only reason for not supporting a SPLOST is if you see a significant amount of waste and misuse of public funds. Union County has one of the best school systems in the State of Georgia with excellent classroom facilities. They just completed a Fine Arts Center a couple of years ago which has been magic for our kids and the wonderful programs that are now possible. They recently added the very impressive Union County Agri-Science Center and construction has begun for new classroom space. They have also purchased new school buses and computer technology equipment, none of which would have been possible without the school ESPLOST. Our young people are the future and we must main-

tain first class recreational and educational facilities for them.

**Q. When will we vote on county SPLOST again?**

A. We are not sure if we will try to do it later this year or next year. We like to do it during another election so that we do not have the extra expense of this election alone. However, sometimes it just turns out that way. We always want to have the election at least a year prior to the SPLOST expiring so that if for any reason it does not pass, we would have an additional year to try again before it expires.

**Q. Has the SPLOST ever been defeated in Union County?**

A. NO. It has never even been close. The reason is that the public realizes that we only spend the money for good projects that help make Union County a better place to live and helps drastically improve our quality of life.

**Mattee... continued from Page 4A**

On cold days, plants can be brought indoors to protect them from freezing damage.

Once your herb plants are matured, you can use them in a variety of ways. You can pluck leaves directly off the plant and use them immediately in cooking. Bunches of cut herbs can be dried by tying them together and hanging them in a dark, dry, well-ventilated area such as an attic or garage for later use. Cut herbs can be frozen after they are rinsed and patted

dry.

Whether you want a fragrant flowering herb for your garden or a savory plant that you can cook with, herbs offer a variety of uses that can be appreciated by any gardener. If you'd like more information on starting your own herb garden or are interested in learning about different herbs to add to one you already have, contact our office to receive our herb gardening publication.

**Riley ... continued from Page 4A**

ready present.

Due to the cross breeding that occurred and unique features of pig biology, the pig population expanded considerably. This caused immeasurable economic and ecological damage across the United States. Due to the extent of interbreeding between these two subspecies, the Eurasian boar and free-ranging domestic pig are now considered by most experts to be the same animal - the wild pig. Unclaimed free ranging populations of wild pigs quickly increased and spread throughout the United States.

Major contributing factors for the success of wild pigs are short reproductive cycles and large litter sizes. Since these animals descended from domestic stock, they were selected for their high reproductive potential. Wild pigs are the most fertile large mammal in existence. They have a gestation period of 112-115 days, or about 16 weeks. Females can begin reproducing at six months of age. A typical sow will give birth to two litters per year consisting of 4 to 6 piglets per litter. Under the right conditions, a sow may produce up to 13 piglets in one litter. Do the math, one sow can contribute to over 50 pigs per year when her offspring start multiplying, because she can produce 4 to 13 piglets every 115 days! While large litters were an ideal trait in a domestic hog, this characteristic has persisted in feral strains and is a major cofactor in the explosion of the wild pig population. Wild pigs travel in groups called sounders consisting of two or three related adult females and their offspring.

Males, especially larger boars, are often solitary. It is common for members of a sounder to exhibit cooperative nursing, during which piglets from all the females will suckle from one sow while the others stand watch for predators. This group behavior can be considered a contributing factor to low mortality rates of the wild pig. Another trait that has made wild pigs so successful is the ability to utilize a variety of habitats. These animals are highly adaptable and inhabit a variety of habitats, including mountainous areas, forests, salt and brackish swamps and marshes, old growth pinelands, semi-arid brush habitats, as well as many other habitat types.

Since their introduction to North America, wild pigs have colonized more than forty of the fifty states. Wild

pig populations are large and growing; their populations are present at uncontrollable densities in some areas, especially in the southeastern states. In addition to other factors, the wide-ranging diet of wild pigs has helped make this species incredibly adaptable. Wild pigs are opportunistic omnivores. They will consume almost anything from agriculture crops and mast crops, such as acorns and fruit, to grub worms and dead animals, also known as carrion.

Though not considered active predators, they will consume fawns, livestock, and the eggs of ground nesting birds in addition to vegetation, agricultural crops, and other food items. The roots of a vegetative food source will often be consumed when the leafy portion or fruits/nuts of the plant are no longer available. During mast years, acorns, beach nuts, pecans, and soft fruit are consumed throughout the fall and winter. Earthworms make up approximately fifty to ninety percent of the carnivorous portion of a wild pig's diet, depending on availability and the region inhabited. With their tough snouts and over-developed neck muscles, wild pigs can be considered "nature's bulldozers." The most common form of damage caused by pigs is ground disruption because of hunting for food. Destruction of crops, yards of homeowners, and natural habitat is of concern and damage of a great magnitude can be created overnight. Wild hogs live all around us on higher elevations as well as in the valleys. A couple of years ago on my farm, wild hogs destroyed the last acre of corn that the bears had left for later and while they were at it, they destroyed the church cemetery all in one weekend. Wild hogs are not just wreaking havoc in farmer's fields, but also in home owner's yards in some of the communities right here in the mountains, so nothing is safe from these ravaging gangs of nature's bulldozers.

For more information on Wild Hogs, you can attend the Feral Swine Workshop and trapping demonstrations at the Union County Schools Agriscience Center on February 2, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Pre-registration is required and to register go to [gooutdoorsgeorgia.com/](http://gooutdoorsgeorgia.com/) and click on "Events".

For more information on feral hogs contact Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D at [info.ccrd@gmail.com](mailto:info.ccrd@gmail.com).

**Cummings... continued from Page 4A**

of Momma's house on Adams Road.

Momma's family had an old Billy Goat that her brothers had taught to lower its head and ram a pair of overalls with a red handkerchief sticking out of the back pocket.

On this particular day the bus had a flat right in front of the old house. Paw paw got out of the bus to change the flat tire. He always carried a red handkerchief in his back pocket. As he bent over to begin changing the flat tire the goat spied the red handkerchief, lowered his head and rammed him right on

**Fowler...**

**continued from Page 4A**

made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. 1:19-20). That's His gospel, or shall you come up with your own? Richard Wurmbrand said there are "those who sincerely believe in God and those who, just as sincerely, believe that they believe."

To dabble in pop spirituality is to be inoculated against the real thing. The Hollywood mantra, "follow your heart" is dangerous because, as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn said, "the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human." The real Jesus offers you a new heart. He knows you, and loves you enough to rescue you from the turbid spiritual backwater of our times. Come to Him, and believe (all of) His Word.

**Preservation Committee says beware the banes and rues**

*By Geri O'Brien, Preservation Committee*

"The bane of my existence" is a commonly used expression to denote something or someone that makes life naggingly miserable. But in the plant world "bane" refers to the older meaning of "poisonous". Cowbane, fleabane, henbane, dogbane, wolf's bane, sheep's bane, lice bane, leopard's bane, bug bane and rat bane are plant names that signify toxicity ranging from irritable to lethal.

Historically, animals and humans learned to distinguish among those plants, and humans gave them names that continue to be a source of education and entertainment throughout the world. Some plants are referred to in ancient literature and herbal folklore handed down for thousands of years and interchanged between countries.

One of the most ancient and most famous garden evils is wolfbane, once used by farmers to effectively exterminate wolves. Currently known as monkshood, it is considered by some to be the most toxic plant in the world. Through the ages in poetry, plays, novels, and modern movies and TV shows, people have accidentally or on purpose taken their lives or had their lives taken by wolfbane. In folklore, some were turned into werewolves by it, but it was also used to give protection against werewolves.

Another group of noxious plants is the rues: goat's rue, meadow rue, fringed rue, Syrian rue, rue anemone, to name a few. These also have a long and noted history in folklore. To rue, means to feel sorry about something and the rue plant is a symbol of grief and repentance. It was used in worship services, hung in doorways to protect from evil spirits and thrown at an enemy while cursing him - presumably giving rise to "you'll rue the day."

Not all toxic plants have bane and rue in their names. Actually, most plants contain some sort of toxins for self-defense, needed since they can't move out of harm's way. Many popular garden plants such as angel's trumpet, daphne, oleander, castor bean, narcissus and daffodil contain various toxins, as does the season's favorite, mistletoe.

When you become weary of winter and the spring plant catalogs have not yet arrived, the little book, *Wicked Plants*, by Amy Stewart is recommended for learning more about what she calls "botanical atrocities."

And whether we are out hiking or working in the garden, it behooves us all to handle plants with care and refrain from tasting and excessive touching, lest we rue the day we did.

For information about activities of the Preservation Committee, contact Clare Johnston at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center (706-745-2655) or visit the website [www.gmrec.uga.edu](http://www.gmrec.uga.edu).

our treasures and our future in their hands. Our Union County Schools Transportation Depart-

ment and its bus drivers do a great job and we should all appreciate their efforts.

**UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

Children's Story Time	<b>Every Monday:</b> Union County Library	11 am
Kiwanis Club	Steve's Steakhouse	Noon
Civil Air Patrol	Blairsville Airport	6 pm
Boy Scouts #101	United Methodist Ch	7 pm
Tri State Bus. Women	<b>Every Tuesday:</b> Cabin Coffee	8 am
Get Fit	First UMC	5:15 pm
Smoky Mtn. Melodies	United Methodist Ch	6:30 pm
Hi Country Harmonizers	Branan Lodge	6:30 pm
BINGO	<b>Every Wednesday:</b> Civic Center	7 pm
Masonic Luncheon	<b>Every Thursday:</b> Cooks Restaurant	11:30 am
Rotary Club	NGTC	Noon
Get Fit	First UMC	5:15 pm