

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Congratulations

As we welcome young ones into the world, we here at the newspaper figure we'll have more than just one opportunity to say thank you for the enjoyment that they bring into our worlds.

Take for instance, the 14U Dizzy Dean baseball team. The Panthers finished fourth in a recent tournament to determine the Dizzy Dean State Championship.

The Panthers couldn't hold off a last inning rally by Hunter Park and lost a heartbreaker by a score of 14 to 9 despite entering the inning up 8 to 7 at the state tournament in Rossville.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



The North Georgia News says thank you to the 14U Panthers that include Lake Hughes, Thomas Dyer, Kaston Hemphill, Josh Orr, Joseph Rockenbaugh, George Page, Isaac Mullanack, J.J. Littles, Conner Shields, Damien Chitwood, Bret Ballew and coaches Danny Hemphill, Lester Chesser, Tony Hughes and James Littles.

We also want to thank 12-year-old Griffin Young for sharing his dream story of playing in the Dream Series in Cooperstown, New York. Tiger baseball finished among the top 16 teams out of 104 teams competing. Congratulations!

It would be silly of us not to include our state champions, the Panthers 12U Softball team. The Union County Recreation Department's 12U All-Star softball team needed just 12 innings to claim its second state title in five years.

Following a district tournament that saw them run roughshod over their opposition, the Lady Panthers faced even less resistance at state, out-scoring the competition 37-3 over three mercy-rule shortened games.

In the opener, Union pounded Douglas County 11-0 before earning a spot in the finals with a 12-0 shellacking of the host team, Valdosta. The Lady Panthers dismantled Douglas County one more time during the championship game, despite allowing three unearned runs in the fourth inning that trimmed the Union County lead to seven runs at 10-3.

However, the Lady Panthers immediately crushed any hope remaining for Douglas County by responding with four more runs of their own, ending the contest by mercy rule in the

See Duncan, page 5A

Art and Beauty

Last month in Atlanta, the Fellowship of the Performing Arts presented "The Most Reluctant Convert," a retelling of the story of C.S. Lewis' journey to faith in Christ. The 80 minute, one-act play featured Max McLean, the founder and artistic director of the new York City-based troupe.

McLean's own reluctant journey includes a girl who took him to a Bible study. "I had not been confronted by the power and insight of the Bible prior to that. At first I wanted to run away, but I couldn't. Then I read John's Gospel - in one sitting. I thought Jesus was going to come right out of the pages of the Bible and take me with him. I knew this story was true and that my life would never be the same again." He later founded FPA as a means to express faith through the dramatic arts. And yes, he married the girl, Sharon.

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Art in its many forms is intended to allow us to experience life from another's perspective. Sometimes it conveys truth through language, such as in a play or literature. Other times the truth can be more subtle, such as in painting or music. Good art is compelling because it tells the truth about God, human beings, and nature.

The original Artist is the One who painted truth into creation. "Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made..." (Rom. 1:20). Is that not why we marvel at the beauty of nature, which is evidence of the mind of God? Humans alone in creation admire and create beauty, because we alone are made in His image and yearn for the Divine.

Lewis' artistry in "The Magician's Nephew" has Digory and Polly arriving to an empty, dreary place. "But then in the chaos, a Voice began to sing in the most sonorous tones imaginable. All at once the blackness overhead was ablaze with stars. The sun was born, laughing for joy as it arose! In the fresh light of the young sun stood the Lion Aslan - huge, shaggy, and bright as it was singing the new world into being. As his song continued, the valley grew green, trees were born, flowers blossomed, and

See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

Q. We have seen the old Hunter England log cabin being relocated and restored at the Farmers Market. Do you have the history of this cabin?

A. We have some history, but we would like to solicit a volunteer or volunteers who would have an interest in spending time obtaining a complete history of the cabin, including who lived there through the years and what their lineage was. This is very important to the history of our community since these were some of the earliest settlers in Union County. Much of that history could be obtained from interviewing some of the current descendants. To volunteer your services, please call my office at (706) 439-6000 and speak with Jennifer.

Q. Can you tell us why the county is involved with an organization called GMRC, what does it stand for and what does it cost for us to be in this organization?

A-1. At a total estimated population of 674,664, the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission (GMRC) serves the following 13 counties: Union, Lumpkin, Rabun, Towns, White, Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Stephens, and 38 municipalities within these counties. Created in 1962 by the Georgia Legislature, the GMRC serves as a forum for regional issues affecting local governments and to serve as a resource for a variety of specialized assistance including economic development, grant writing and administration, government planning, transportation, historic preservation, geographic information systems and mapping, human resources, and workforce development.

A-2. The GMRC is governed by a Board of Directors, known as the GMRC Council, of which, Mayor Jim Conley, Mitch Griggs, Economic Development Director, and myself all serve representing Union County. The GMRC Council meets once a month on the last Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. at different locations throughout the region. Each of the local governments pay local dues to the organization based on \$1.10 per capita for the above-referenced services. Union County contributes \$23,884 annually for dues.

For more information, please contact the GMRC at (770)

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Anti-Drug Coalition

Trusting our Kids: A Perspective

When some adults say that drug testing your own children can be a violation of trust in the relationship, it is difficult for the rest of us to agree with that argument. Would you choose to never look at a re-transport card, and just take their word for how they are doing in school? Would you trust them with a credit card and never check the bill? We must teach our kids that blind trust is not going to work for them in grown-up life. Providing proof is just part of normal living.

The mission of the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition is to support an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse. Visit and Like our Facebook page for additional articles and videos.

We are talking about teenagers. Raising them is all about giving them rope, and then seeing what they do with it. How many parents of children in trouble have regretted that they ignored the signs and were afraid to test? It is so much easier to deal with a problem ear-

See Coalition, page 5A

"Say, you never did tell me where my new home state ranks in child health studies."



RC&D

The Chattahoochee-Oconee Foothills Landscape

Most of us take for granted the spectacular mountain views that we drive by every day and don't stop to realize why there are vast stretches of tree covered mountains with no houses or buildings disturbing the views. This beautiful mountain land, that most moved here to enjoy, is protected by the US Government under the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS).

RC&D Executive Director

Frank Riley



USFS is by far the largest landowner in many counties in north Georgia owning over 50% of the land in many of them. The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

The Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest provides outdoor recreation opportunities and natural resources in the two forests, the Chattahoochee in north Georgia and the Oconee in north central Georgia. The Forests feature over 867,000 acres across 26 counties, thousands of miles of clear-running streams and rivers, approximately 850 miles of recreation trails, and dozens of campgrounds, picnic areas, and other recreation activity opportunities, these landscapes are rich in natural scenery, history, and culture.

The landscapes are more than trees and streams. They provide a sense of place for people - reflecting the histories and defining the future. The forest is all around us for all to enjoy and provide most any type of recreation activity that we can imagine. The lands that the USFS manages is owned by the citizens, so your input as how the forests are managed, are used, and will be used is important to USFS management.

We can't all get our way but the collective voice from our input can help shape the direction and future of the forests. In 2016 the Chattahoochee Oconee NF began a series of community conversations in various cities around the forests along with an online forum to reach out to partners, stakeholders and community members to realize a shared vision to address complex conservation challenges across the area called the Foothills Landscape.

The 143,419 acres that make up the Foothills Landscape stretch across the Chattahoochee National Forest and marks the area where the mountains are visibly reduced to

See Riley, page 5A

UCFD Grants

Every day we get into a vehicle and drive.

Most of us have been driving for so long that it is second nature and we never considered the dangers that we and other drivers may face every day when we are on the road.

Here are a few things that we should consider when we get behind the wheel.

We, as drivers, should be aware of our vehicle and how it performs on the road.

We should make sure that all the safety features are functional. We should also ensure that we have good brakes and tires. Most people never consider that an average vehicle weighs about 4,000 pounds.

That much weight at any significant speed can cause some major damage if it were to strike something or someone.

Drivers should also consider that it is not easy to stop a 4,000-pound vehicle. There is a reaction time and a braking time to come to a complete stop. The reaction time is the time that it takes for a person to realize that they must stop their vehicle.

This time is based on the driver paying attention to the road and the vehicles around them. If the driver is distracted by the radio or cell phone, the reaction time can dramatically increase.

The braking time is the time that it takes to apply the break and for the vehicle to stop. During these times, a car can cover a considerable distance.

For example, at 65 Miles Per Hour, a vehicle can travel 64 feet during the reaction time and 211 feet during the braking time. The total stopping distance is 275 feet.

That is almost the length of a football field. These distances are based on non-distracted drivers with dry conditions, new tires, and good brakes.

If someone were to pull out in front of a vehicle at that speed, it would be difficult to stop in time. Slowing down should be something that we all should consider.

Car accidents happen every day. We should consider the safety features of our vehicle, reducing our speed and not be distracted while driving. Keeping these things in mind may prevent an accident.

Union County Fire Department ~ Our Family Protecting Your Family~

David Dyer is the Fire Chief and Emergency Management Agency director for Union County.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Wyatt and John

John Cummings was my great grandfather and Wyatt was his father. Wyatt's father had moved the Cummings clan to North Alabama soon after the Creek Indians were defeated at Horseshoe Bend. The battle was a decisive one for Andrew Jackson and his band of Tennesseans. Wyatt had not been married for very long when South Carolina fired the first shots on Fort Sumter. After this event states across the South held Secessional conventions to determine whether to stay in the Union or secede from the Union.

Alabama held their convention in Montgomery. Wyatt Cummings and the other people of Winston County elected a man by the name of Chris Sheets to represent them at the convention. The people of Winston County were settlers and homesteaders in Winston County.

There were only a handful of plantations in the county and most people did not own any slaves. So, in an overwhelming vote the people of the county decided that Chris should vote against secession at the convention. All the people of Winston County wanted was to remain neutral. They empathized with their brothers in the southern part of Alabama. But, the thought of fighting to maintain the right to own slaves was something the people of Winston County didn't understand.

During the first day of the secession convention Chris Sheets was not allowed to speak. When he tried to speak he was thrown into jail and beaten for his stance on the subject of secession. Chris was held in the jail in Montgomery during the entire convention and was only turned loose when the convention ended. He went home battered and bruised as well as feeling he had failed. As you know Alabama did secede from the Union and the War Between the States began. Many of the planters who had vigorously supported secession and war did not want to fight and began paying others to fight in their place during the war. Soon the state created a Home Guard to help protect the interest of the citizens of Alabama.

One of the objectives of the Home Guard was to encourage the enlistment of young men into the fighting ranks of the Confederate Army. At first the Home Guard was a decent group of people and they protected local interests. But, soon most of the Home Guard became part of the main army. As a result the Home Guard became infiltrated with rogues and less desirable men. In Winston County the Home Guard began to terrorize the very people they were supposed to protect.

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See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Japanese Beetles

Once again, the hot summer months have brought those pesky brown and green Japanese beetles that devastate our foliage. These beetles first appeared in the United States in 1916. Like most introduced species, it is not a pest in its native country of Japan, where natural predators keep beetle populations at bay. However, since its first appearance here, populations have continued to skyrocket and devour flowers and leaves.

Japanese beetles are about half an inch in length and have coppery backs. Their heads and shoulders are a deep green color, and they have tufts of white hair covering their bodies. Adults emerge from the soil and begin aggressively feeding in June. They typically live for thirty to forty-five days, but populations can continue to cause damage for up to six weeks as young adults continue to emerge. These beetles feed on over 300 species of plants and will eat almost every part of a plant except the stem. Though a single beetle does not eat very much at all, when they swarm, they can easily defoliate entire ornamental plants and vegetables as they feed on the plant tissue between the veins. As the beetles continue to feast, the vegetation they damage release odors that draw even more beetles leading to an infestation.

Japanese beetles are strong flyers and can often travel for miles. Because of this, it is difficult to tell the source of the infestation. Once they have found a suitable area to establish, the females will mate and burrow about two to three inches into the soil to lay their eggs. A single female can lay up to sixty eggs in her lifetime. The larvae (grubs) hatch soon after and grow rapidly throughout the summer months, feeding on turf-grass roots.

Beetles overwinter deep in the soil in the grub phase. They can dig as deep as six inches during the coldest months, and once the soil reaches fifty degrees, they become inactive. In the spring, once soil temperatures climb again, the grubs move back into the root zone. After feeding for another four to six weeks, the grubs go through a transition stage (pupa) and become adults which emerge in June to begin the cycle again.

The Japanese beetle is particularly devastating to landscapes because both the grubs and the adults feed excessively on plants. However, there are a few control methods that can be taken to decrease beetle populations around your home. If adult beetles are infesting only a small area of your property, physical removal may be most economical and effective. In cases where a

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From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



See Mattee, page 5A

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