

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Lend a helping hand

I bring the Union County community yet another opportunity to help a life-long resident in need. Of course, it's not like Libby Burrell hasn't helped her community before. In fact, almost her entire life has been spent helping others. This is a plea from her family.

As someone who has experienced their share of health issues, I use my column this week to ask for help for a very deserving human being and devoted Christian, Libby Burrell. I've known her almost my entire life.

She is an amazing woman. Libby is a mother, wife, daughter, sister, aunt and friend to many. She along with her husband Ben have raised three wonderful and amazing children Angie, Bryan and Carrie. She has spent her life in the church and is a pillar of the community. She is always there to help anyone that needs help in any way that she can. She is a woman that is loved, trusted and cherished by many people.

Libby is fighting the battle of her life. She was diagnosed with cervical cancer almost a year ago and has been traveling back and forth between her home in Blairsville to Gainesville for medical treatments and doctors appointments. As a result of the treatments, she has become very weak. She recently fell and fractured her back and it has become increasingly difficult for her to get in and out of the house.

First and most importantly, anyone who will pray - pray for a mighty intervention from God, for a turn around in her condition. It seems she takes one step forward and three steps back over the course of the past 10 months. It is heart breaking to watch and know there is nothing you can do to change this for her. In the beginning, her family prayed for healing of the cancer, they didn't anticipate that all these other obstacles would transpire.

Right now a ramp leading outside has been built to be able to push her out in her wheelchair. However, it is still incredibly difficult to get her up the hill to the family car. She has to travel over an uneven grass yard to get to the vehicle.

Libby does not have any strength to help with getting her up to the parking area to get her into the vehicle. The family hopes to

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Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Facebook and Community

Rolling out Facebook's new mission, founder Mark Zuckerberg mentioned church as an example of community. It made me wonder if he thinks church and Facebook are interchangeable, although he never actually said that.

Zuckerberg compared organizers of Facebook groups to pastors who care for their congregation. Then he said, "Memberships in all kinds of communities around the world has been declining, in a lot of places by as much as one-quarter. That's a lot of people who now need to find a sense of purpose and support somewhere else." He continues, "This is our challenge. We have to build a world where every single person has a sense of purpose and community." With that he announces the new mission: "To give people the power to build community to bring the world closer together."

Zuckerberg's Facebook groups are going to reach out and hug the whole world! Sounds inspiring. But it's much less so that Facebook plans to harness the power of artificial intelligence to nudge users to join Facebook groups. It's no wonder that Tristan Harris, former Google product manager, accuses social media of brain hacking. He says, "Never before in history have a handful of people at a handful of technology companies shaped how a billion people think and feel every day. The constant distraction of phone apps and emails are weakening our relationships to each other." The more user attention, the more advertiser revenue, at the cost of relationships. Zuckerberg is right about our need for community, but the paradox is that marketing his product can militate against it.

A friend of mine said, "The community on Facebook might be interesting, or entertaining in ways, but can never replace a true personal relationship, or Christian fellowship." In his book, "Faith Seeking Understanding," Dr. Daniel Migliore explains that the New Testament church "is a distinctive form of human community characterized by mutuality, interdependence, forgiveness, and friendship. Ecclesial life is a new community of free persons centered on God's love in Jesus Christ and empowered to service by the Holy Spirit." Christian fellowship means dwelling together

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. How does the County apply for state and federal grants?

A. Basically, whenever we find out about grant possibilities, we go through whatever process is required for that specific grant. Sometimes it is a paper application that has to be submitted with specific forms, county information, narratives, letters of support, and financial information. The online applications are generally the same, but they have to be submitted electronically.

Q. How does the county find out about available grants?

A. The Sheriff's Office and Fire Department are usually notified about upcoming grant possibilities from whoever is offering the grant. Organizations that work with county governments such as, Georgia Mountain Regional Commission, the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Department of Community Affairs notify us about other grant possibilities.

Q. Who does the actual application for the county grants?

A. Usually it is one of the groups listed above in the previous question, but for smaller grants individual county departments will complete the application process themselves. However, the Georgia Mountain Regional Commission (GMRC) does the lion's share of the work. Grants are not as plentiful as they were a few years ago, so it does require a lot of work and research to secure most grants. Also, most grants are competitive meaning there is usually a set amount of funding available from an agency that is divided among the grant awardees.

Q. Where does grant funding come from?

A. Most grant funding comes from government and private agencies. Also, many of the large retail companies offer grants. Some of those grants are in the form of material and/or labor, but some also include some cash funding. Walmart has provided some funding and labor and materials, and The Home Depot has been very generous with our community in providing labor and materials for several projects, including work at our Leon Dav-

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Anti-Drug Coalition

What Are the Costs of Marijuana Legalization?

As marijuana legalization spreads across our nation, many see it as an inevitable tidal wave of change that will become the new norm. The prevailing mindset seems to be that "everyone wants it." However, the simple fact that the marijuana lobby has a brilliant marketing strategy of social norming does not mean that everyone wants marijuana legalization, nor does it indicate that our responses to this issue are coming from an informed point of view.

Common sense has employers concerned about the impacts of impairment in the workplace, but the pressures to think that using marijuana is the constitutional right of the employee causes entire corporations to consider backing

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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.



"I think Gramps makes up stuff. He claims when he was a kid, summer vacations lasted three whole months!"

When you volunteer

As many of you may or may not know, Union County Fire Department is a combination department. That means we are made up of career firefighters (full-time paid) and volunteer firefighters.

It takes both to get the job done.

However the department, as well as the entire nation, has seen a decline in volunteer firefighters.

The reason why is a mystery and I wanted to make people aware that we are in need of volunteers.

I also wanted to explain what volunteering in the fire department involves.

Joining the fire department is filled with many unknowns. When you join, you are committing to several things. First, there is the training. That involves approximately 40 hours of training on how to safely operate on a fire or emergency scene. There is also continued training each year on various subjects from emergency management to medical response to search and rescue. Second, you are committing to responding to calls. We understand that people must work and that there are many things to do but we need firefighters to respond. You are not required to respond to every call but we need an effort. As the old saying, "what if there was an emergency and nobody came?"

What do you get out of volunteering at the fire department? You get valuable training that can save you, your family and people in the community. You get to do things and see things that not many people get to see and do. Going to a car accident or structure fire are unusual things for the average person but is an everyday happening for a firefighter.

You get reimbursed for each call. There is also a firefighter pension plan that a person can qualify for. The best thing is that you get to be part of a unique group of people who are dedicated to helping their community.

Any person who wants to be a volunteer firefighter can simply fill out an application at the headquarters station. If the person qualifies, the department will schedule training at your own pace. After the initial training, firefighters will then receive 911 calls on their handheld radio or cell phone.

Volunteering in the fire department can be an extremely rewarding experience. For more information, please contact Union County Fire Department headquarters at (706) 439-6091. Also, please visit our Facebook page or go to www.MakeMeafirefighter.org.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Uncle Bud and Cousin Jr.

In 1954 Uncle Bud was entering his freshman year of high school at Phil Campbell.

Dad and Uncle Bud's cousin, Junior, was an 11th grader. Uncle Bud started at left tackle as a freshman on the Phil Campbell High School Football team. He was athletic and big, weighing in at 210 pounds. But, Uncle Bud lacked two things. First, he was inexperienced. Second, Uncle Bud lacked a mean streak. What Uncle Bud lacked, Junior made up for. Junior weighed close to 230 pounds. My Dad has told me he watched Junior carry two bales of hay (one in each hand) and toss each one 10 feet in the air on top of a hay wagon using only one arm. Junior also had a mean streak. He was the leader of the team because he was the meanest, toughest and strongest boy on the team. But, he took care of his friends and family.

The first game of the year, the boys from Phil Campbell rode 12 miles south on Highway 181 to the little town of Hackleburgh. The Hackleburgh team was good, demonstrated by the fact of making the state playoffs for a number of years consecutively. There was one boy that played with Hackleburgh that was a senior and was headed to play college football. He was recruited by Alabama, Auburn and Mississippi State. The boy's name was Hovater and he was big, experienced and mean as the boys from Phil Campbell were about to find out.

Phil Campbell had the ball on the 20-yard-line on the first play from the line of scrimmage. Uncle Bud found himself playing left tackle and directly across the line was this monster of a man named Hovater. As the quarterback from Phil Campbell began running through his cadence, the Hovater boy yelled, "Hut" and Phil Campbell's center snapped the ball. Before the referee could blow the whistle the defensive line of Hackleburgh crashed through the young line of Phil Campbell and gang tackled the quarterback of Phil Campbell. A new quarterback had to come into the game because the starter was hurt on the first play of the game. This was a preview of things to come for Phil Campbell.

A few plays later Uncle Bud was still playing left tackle. He was holding his own with the Hovater boy. Just before the ball was snapped the Hovater boy called Uncle Bud a hillbilly redneck. As Bud looked up at the boy, Hovater spit tobacco juice into his eyes. As he was trying to wipe his eyes the ball was snapped. The Hovater boy caught Uncle Bud in the nose with a forearm and stomped his right foot with his cleats as he

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Many thanks

Before I get to this week's article, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Flag Wavin' Dollar Savin' Buy Local Week. Thank you to all the members who took part in the event and a special thank you to Impact Design and Creations for being the sponsor. Congratulations to Russ and Gail Eberle the winners of the \$100 gift card awarded by Impact Design and Creations.

This week marks the next Business After Hours/Business of the Quarter which is being held on Thursday July 20th from 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m. We would like to say a special thank you to Young Harris WaterSports for hosting and sponsoring the event; they are located at 1525 Mining Gap Rd in Young Harris. Chamber Members, bring your business cards and grab a friend -you will not want to miss the great FREE networking event!

We are pleased to be honoring Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Corporation as the recipient of the next Business of the Quarter. Blue

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber

Regina Allison



Letters to the Editor

Trumpcare

Dear Editor, The Senate's proposed Better Care Reconciliation Act (Trumpcare) will result in cuts to long-term care services, greater unemployment and families needing to bear more of the burden of care for their loved ones.

Medicaid will be cut \$869 billion (25 percent) over 10 years and 1,757,000 citizens in Georgia will be affected. Medicaid acts as a safety net by paying for long-term care not covered by Medicare, and 70 percent of individuals will need this sometime in their life. 72 percent of nursing homes receive Medicaid funding.

Nursing home care costs an average of \$82,000 a year, well beyond the cost of most seniors and their families. Medicaid also pays for in-home care, and if home and community based services are cut, more people will have to receive care in higher cost nursing homes.

Reductions in staffing, lower quality of care and poorer health outcomes, even premature death, are expected. The president's proposed budget cuts an additional \$6 billion in Medicaid. Given that health care constitutes one sixth of the U.S. economy, economists predict the cuts could serve as a catalyst for a recession.

The bill, which is a response to calls to replace the Patient and Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), will also eliminate health care benefits for thousands of seniors in North Georgia who are not yet eligible for Medicare. Seniors here are among the 1,117,129 retirees in the state and the 1,714,145 Social Security beneficiaries. Of those receiving Social Security, more than 50 percent of recipients rely on this for more than 50 percent of their income and 90 percent rely on it for 28.9 percent of their income. This means that a sizable proportion of their income is devoted to health

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No letters? Really?

Dear Editor, Got my paper today. Very disappointed. The most interesting thing in the whole paper are the letters from your readers and there were NONE.

I can't believe you didn't receive even one. Me and the neighbors always look forward to Lamar, Mickey and the letters more than any other part of the paper. They are always the most interesting page. All the other articles on this page are only interesting to a very select few of your readers.

Me and my neighbors would like to see one whole page of nothing but letters from your readers. Thanks for letting me vent.

Respectfully submitted, Jim and Joanne Morris

Fall Webworms

A few months ago I wrote about eastern and forest tent caterpillars making webs in the crooks of branches and causing unsightly damage to trees. Well, now we have a new culprit on our hands. The webs that you see at the ends of branches are caused by fall webworms. While these webs may look similar to what we saw in the spring, these critters are quite different from tent caterpillars.

The adult webworm moth has a one and a half inch wingspan. Its wings are white, and sometimes they have small black spots on them. The caterpillars are about one inch long, pale green or yellow in color and have tufts of long hairs covering their bodies. The webs they form are always at the tips of branches so they can eat plenty of the nutrient rich new tree growth.

Though webworms can sometimes be seen in the spring, they do the most damage in late summer and fall. Adult moths begin to emerge in summer where they disperse and mate. After mating, females will deposit their eggs on the undersides of leaves on trees and other plants. The egg masses can have up to six hundred eggs and are covered in hair to protect the new generation of webworms until they hatch. Once the caterpillars emerge, they build their silken nests to protect themselves while they eat the foliage. As they use up all of the leaves, they expand their nests down the branch until they are ready to pupate. The caterpillars will burrow into the ground and overwinter there as pupae. Once the weather warms up again, they will emerge as adult moths to begin the cycle all over again.

Webworms can do a lot of damage to trees, but they will almost never kill them. On smaller trees and low hanging branches, webs can be removed a variety of ways. If the branch is small enough, it may simply be pruned off and disposed of. If the branch is too big to clip off, then webs can be manually destroyed using a rake or long pole, and larvae can be knocked down into trash bags and killed. Many beneficial insects and birds rely on webworms for food, so simply tearing open the nests and letting natural predators eat the caterpillars will also help to keep future populations at bay.

Nests that are high up in trees can be damaged with pressure washers or by spraying them with insecticides. Pesticides containing Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) or spinosad are specific for harmful insects and will not hurt the beneficial ones that control the webworms. Carbaryl and pyrethroid insecticides are also very effective, but they can kill most insects, including non-harmful ones. Whenever applying pesticides to the nests,

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UGA Extension From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



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