

Member in Good Standing

With all the whispers going round in two states, I'll tell you what I know about the recent Blue Ridge Mountain EMC hullabaloo.

Four folks were left off the 2017 EMC Board of Directors ballots. One in Towns County, one in Clay County, North Carolina, and two in Union County.

I'm told that the Board of Directors did not vote to keep these individuals off the ballot.

I'm told that the EMC Credentials Committee was given some bad advice from legal counsel regarding the phrase, "member in good standing." There were two stacks of candidate folders, one stack, the Committee was told, was candidates considered to be members not in good standing. The second stack was complete with members in good standing.

While there is no real definition of "member in good standing," four individuals were kept off for one reason or another. The direction the board took, led Vice Chairman Steven Phillips to throw up his hands and say sayonara (farewell) to the board.

On Friday, with the assistance of Hiwassee Attorney Larry Sorgen, (yes, that Larry Sorgen), Bert Rogers, one of the four persons left off the ballot, filed for, and was granted an injunction halting the upcoming election.

On Thursday night, the Credentials Committee reconvened and placed the four persons on the ballot. An emergency meeting on Friday by the BRMEMC Board of Directors approved the four persons joining the 2017 EMC Board of Directors ballot.

A new advertisement identifying the people running for the Board of Directors was issued to legal organs in five counties.

A hearing was scheduled for 1 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 7, in the Towns County Courthouse. Bert Rogers isn't happy about the way things transpired. And he shouldn't be.

A board is only as good as its legal advice.

This board is taking one on the chin because of the advice to establish a definition of "member in good standing," after they've been given the advice not to put folks on the ballot.

Membership, as *members in good standing*, please keep this board of directors in your prayers.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Visible Faith

Seeing an opportunity, they acted decisively. Four men, not intending to draw attention to themselves, were determined to get it done. Somebody noticed.

We don't know if they were friends before this, nor how they knew the paraplegic. What we do know is that these four men became aware that a powerful person was meeting nearby with influential people. So they loaded up the paralyzed man and dropped in to the meeting. We don't know what they said, but what they wanted to happen was obvious.

Perhaps you recognize this story as a historic encounter with Jesus. The point of the story is that Jesus demonstrates his authority to forgive with a physical healing of the man. But don't miss a tiny phrase in the narrative. Considering what the four had done, and "Seeing their faith" (Luke 5:20), Jesus responded. Faith is not an invisible, internal concept for those who believe and follow Jesus.

Jesus had already expressed this idea in his Sermon on the Mount. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see our good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mat. 5:16). To Jesus, faith means you will have a light to shine, and its purpose is to glorify your heavenly Father. That presumes there is darkness somewhere within your reach.

Martin Luther famously called the Biblical book of James an "epistle of straw" for its emphasis on works. But I see no difference between what Jesus said and "What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works?" (2:14). To claim faith but live a complacent or compromised life is foregone to the mercy of God and the regeneration by the Holy Spirit poured out upon us richly through Jesus. It is antithetical to the exchanged life expressed as, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20).

The church has made itself visible in culture. Consider the architecture that creates a sense of sacred space as an aid to worship. Art through the ages expresses Christian themes of cre-

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Is there a difference between trash, garbage, junk and junk vehicles?

A. Yes, there is a difference. Garbage generally refers to food products or by products of food preparation. Trash is usually considered newspapers, cups, fast food bags, grocery bags, Styrofoam and similar other items.

Junk generally refers to abandoned types of equipment and appliances, including lawn mowers, washing machines, motorcycles, toys or similar items.

Junk vehicles are vehicles that are no longer in operating condition, do not have current license plates, and are sitting in the same place for an extended period of time.

Q. I have seen a few properties around the county that look trashy. What can be done about these?

A. This is a very common question. Trash has a lot of meanings to a lot of different people. We first divide trash up into the two categories of garbage and trash.

Garbage (generally including food) cannot be left out on in the open. It violates state health ordinances.

Trash, such as paper, newspapers, paper cups, bags, etc. are considered trash. They do not smell and are therefore not covered under state guidance.

The county has a trash ordinance and you cannot have "trash" out in your yard visible to the general public. You can call the county office with a complaint and someone will follow up on it.

Q. Our neighbor has an open trailer in front of their house and it is full of garbage bags and I have no way to know what is in them, but I do know that when wild animals get in them, they are scattered all around the neighborhood. What can we do?

A. Call the county office, give us the address and we will have someone check it out.

While we cannot prevent someone storing their garbage

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Anti-Drug Coalition

Writing a Letter to Your Kid

If you're concerned about your child's alcohol or drug use, the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids says consider writing a letter. Yes, the good, old-fashioned pen-and-paper kind.

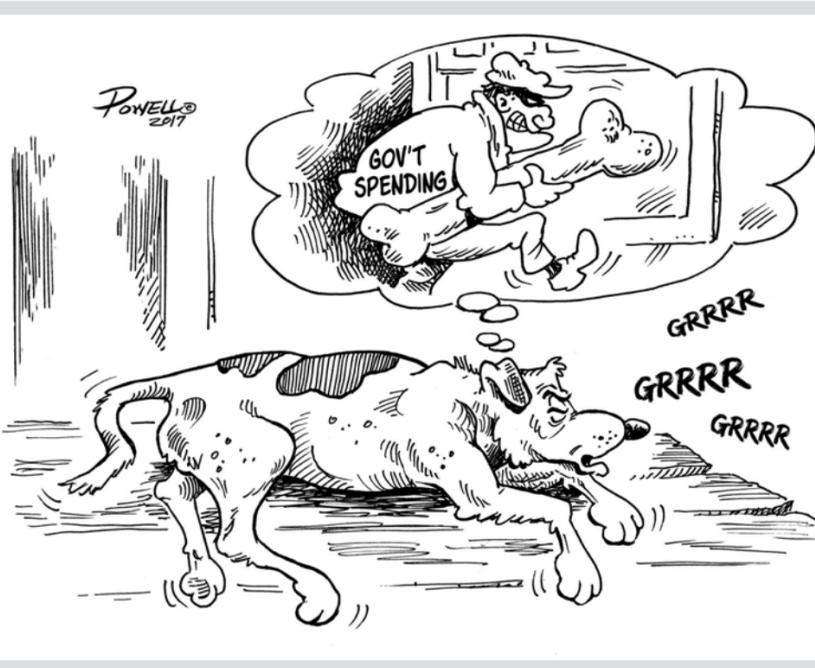
A written letter can provide an opportunity to express your thoughts and feelings to your son or daughter that you might find hard to share in person.

In today's world of emailing and texting (not to mention a steady stream of digital distractions even when you are in the same room together), a "retro" method of communication has a good chance of breaking through the noise and getting your child's attention. In many ways, a letter shows an extra level of effort, time and respect.

Plus, in a letter you may find it easier to

See Coalition, page 5A

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.



Letters to the Editor

Blessed with good employees

To My Friends at EMC:

A few days ago we had a lightning strike in our area, knocking our power off for about 30 minutes. During this brief period, as lightning was still popping, I realized I had never had proper concern for EMC employees whose lives are endangered as they work to get the power outages restored.

As a member of the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors I have a special appreciation for our linemen who perform their duties during the many situations they are in. In fact, my hat is off to all EMC employees.

Charles Jenkins

A Matter of Risk Assessment

Dear Editor,

Depending on the study, the expert scientific consensus that climate change is real and caused by humans varies between 93 percent to 99.9 percent. Consider the following facts. The National Academy of Science of every country in the world agrees with climate change being caused by the human production of greenhouse gases. A recent study was done reviewing all peer reviewed papers mentioning climate change written from 2013-2014. More than 24,000 agreed that climate change was caused by humans. Only 5 rejected the idea. Ever major scientific society in the world also agrees with this. Approximately 195 nations of the earth signed onto the Paris Climate Agreement. Only Syria and Nicaragua did not sign. Now the U.S. is con-

See Dixon, page 5A

What's up with that?

Dear Editor,

It recently came to my attention that in 2014, Union General Hospital Inc. purchased almost 600 acres on the Nottely River several miles away from their campus, for a cost of \$2.6 million.

It seemed odd to me that they would spend that much for property that they couldn't put to use with their facilities, until I also noticed that a 3.3-acre tract in the center of that property was also purchased in 2014 by Michael Gowder, the then CEO of the hospital.

My question is whether the hospital supplied essentially a large private estate for their CEO at their expense and tax load.

Or did the hospital board somehow not know of the separate purchase by the Gowders? Regardless, a questionable expenditure of

See Stratton, page 5A

Eclipse Excitement

The Solar Eclipse excitement is in full swing. Just a couple of months ago many people didn't know that Union County was in the path of a once-in-a-lifetime event but now the solar eclipse is a daily topic of conversation.

People are discussing the best locations to view the eclipse and what they may need to be prepared. There have been many questions about eclipse glasses and how to safely use them. Union County EMA/Fire Department would like to provide a few safety tips for viewing the solar eclipse.

Union County is in the path of totality meaning that at approximately 2:35 p.m. the sun will be completely blocked by the moon. The time before and after totality there will be a partial eclipse where only part of the sun will be blocked. The sun will still be visible and it is dangerous to view the partial eclipse without eye protection in the form of approved solar eclipse glasses or other filter.

Eclipse glasses are available but people must make certain that the glasses are certified for solar eclipse viewing. According to NASA, glasses must meet the ISO 12312-2 International Standard. Before using the glasses always inspect your solar filter; if scratched or damaged, discard it. Read and follow any instructions. Parents should always supervise children using glasses or other solar filters.

NASA also recommends that when viewing the partial eclipse, "cover your eyes with your eclipse glasses or solar viewer before looking up at the bright sun. After glancing at the sun, turn away and remove your filter — do not remove it while looking at the sun. Do not look at the partially eclipsed sun through an unfiltered camera, telescope, binoculars, or other optical device. Similarly, do not look at the sun through a camera, a telescope, binoculars, or any other optical device while using your eclipse glasses or hand-held solar viewer — the concentrated solar rays will damage the filter and enter your eyes, causing serious injury. Seek expert advice from an astronomer before using a solar filter with a camera, a telescope, binoculars, or any other optical device."

If you are within the path of totality, remove your solar filter only when the moon completely covers the sun. Experience totality, then, as soon as the bright sun begins to reappear, replace your solar viewer to glance at the remaining partial phases.

This is a special, once-in-a-lifetime event, and we want everyone to enjoy it without injury. Please purchase glasses or a viewer and follow the safety tips.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Laura and the Salesman

After graduation Paul worked around his dad's farm for a couple of months and then left to attend college at the University of Arkansas. He had been offered a scholarship to play baseball for the Razorbacks. Back in those days student athletes were allowed to practice more than present day athletes. So, the Arkansas baseball team held late summer baseball practices. Paul was exposed to some really good pitching that he was able to handle. The young man was left handed and was able to hit the best pitchers on the team.

However, there was a young man present who had recently left Arkansas because he had received an invitation to try out with the St. Louis Cardinals. This lefty pitcher had a wicked curve ball and slider. The fellow's fast ball approached 100 mph and trying as much as possible Paul could not connect with this fellow's pitches. Just when he thought he'd catch up to a fast ball Paul would receive a curve ball. Then even though Paul knew it was coming the fellow's slider would always strike him out. He would say, "I knew the slider was coming and it was always in the dirt, but, I couldn't help it. I would always swing at the last pitch."

So, by the end of fall practice Paul was really discouraged. He couldn't get a hit off this guy. On top of his batting problems Paul was worried about his girlfriend back at home.

Paul just knew his old nemesis was going to steal his gal. On top of everything else was the fact that he was bored. The young man was in a new town and didn't know anyone except those other folks on the team. He had no idea about what he should study so Paul was just taking core classes. In essence the young man was discouraged, lonely and confused about his future. So, he left Arkansas and went home to North Alabama.

Paul's father, Columbus, cried like a baby when his son came home from college. But, soon things got back to normal for the young man. He found a job at a textile mill where he worked during the week and played baseball on the mill's team on weekends. Paul also loved basketball and soon landed a job as a basketball referee for local high school games. This job soon landed him in hot water. His old High School team, Phil Campbell, was playing their arch rival, Hackleburgh. His younger brother, Bud, played for Phil Campbell as well as many of his younger friends and Dad found himself refereeing the game.

You must understand that Dad knew all

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Ticks

Though finding insects on your ornamental plants and vegetables is certainly frustrating, there are few things more unsettling than finding a tick feeding on your body! Because they feed on animals multiple times throughout their lives, they are also dangerous vectors of disease as they transfer parasites from one animal to another. In these hot and humid summer months, it is important to protect yourself and your animals against tick bites and prevent the spread of disease.

Each stage during a tick's development needs to have a blood meal in order to mature. Adult males mate with female ticks while the females engorge on a blood meal. Shortly after, females drop off the host, and then they will lay a clutch of about 6000 eggs a week later. Depending on the weather, the eggs will hatch within several weeks, releasing six legged larvae known as "seed ticks." Seed ticks will climb up a blade of grass and wait for their first host to walk through the area. They can sense the presence of animals they feed on by smelling the carbon dioxide the animals exhale. Once a host passes through, the tick will latch on and begin gorging itself on the animal's blood. When its stomach is fully extended, the tick will drop off, digest its meal, and shed its skin to become an eight legged nymph that more closely resembles the adults. Seed ticks typically prefer to feed on small hosts such as rodents, but adult ticks will feed on larger animals such as deer and humans.

The three main ticks in Georgia have distinctive appearances that can help distinguish them from each other. The Lone Star tick got its name from the white spot found on the back of the females. Their mouthparts are also much longer than those of other ticks. Lone Stars feed on a wide variety of animals such as humans, horses, deer, dogs, birds and rodents. The American dog tick has short mouthparts that are barely visible. Both males and females have a white mottled pattern on their backs. Though they prefer to feed on dogs, dog ticks will feed on larger animals. However, the ticks only feed on humans once they become adults. The black-legged tick is smaller than the other ticks and has no white markings. Like the Lone Star tick, the black-legged takes a wide variety of hosts as it develops.

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) and Lyme Disease are the two most dangerous diseases transmitted by ticks in Georgia. RMSF is caused by infectious bacteria and the symptoms include sudden chills, fever, headache, and bloodshot eyes. This disease gets its name from the spotted rash it causes, which starts at

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber Tourism Director

Tobie Chandler



Total Solar Eclipse

By now, you may have heard about this exciting once-in-a-lifetime event called the Great American Total Solar Eclipse. For the first time in 99 years, a Total Solar Eclipse will be crossing the country from central Oregon through South Carolina in a 70-mile-wide path. Fortunately for us, Blairsville is in the path of totality and we will experience 1 minute and 58 seconds of totality!

It is true that we are expecting to have an influx of visitors to our community beginning Thursday, Aug. 17th through Wednesday, Aug. 23rd. However, I want to encourage you to remember all of the positive advantages of having these extra tourists in town. First and foremost, this is an opportunity for us to show off our community to visitors that may have never heard of Blairsville, and hope they come back to visit us again during the fall, winter, or spring.

Additionally, this event is beneficial for all of our lodging properties, restaurants, and shops

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UGA Extension From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



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