

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## We Will Prevail Against the Pandemic

Since the inception of these great United States, the people of this nation have excelled at setting aside their differences to band together with shared purpose to take on any enemy that would do us harm.

Not so long ago, during World War II, the enemy at the gates was genocidal fascism hell-bent on razing the world to create a new one in its own twisted image. More recently, on Sept. 11, 2001, our people became the target of a murderous ideology obsessed with upending freedom by way of indiscriminate bloodshed.

Today, the enemy is a virus that, while wholly lacking in ideology, is no less insidious an adversary spoiling for a fight, and We the People will do what we have always done: we will rally to this common cause, and with our health care workers on the front lines, we will prevail in the face of this crisis.

Ironically, the current situation calls for us to come together by staying apart. Social distancing appears to be, at least for the time being, our saving grace against a virus we still don't understand.

As we work to unravel the mysteries of this highly contagious disease – the exact nature of its communicability, how to deliver the knockout blow, etc. – an untold number of people across the country and globe are falling ill and dying.

And among the ever-increasing positive case counts and death tolls are still other victims: our individual liberties, public and private institutions, the economy and labor force, social norms and more. Indeed, these pillars of society are currently under the weather from this viral invader, but they've yet to succumb.

Many of the symptoms our nation is exhibiting stem from a multi-front immune response. Government-imposed restrictions coupled with the volunteer actions of individuals, businesses and organizations are being implemented at every level to slow the spread of the virus and minimize loss of life, and rightly so.

From mandated shelter-in-place orders to newly minted social guidelines and the closing of schools and businesses, there are real costs associated with this national fight to save lives. Importantly, it's OK and perhaps necessary to recognize these costs, which we pay right now because we have to.

What of the millions of people with developmental disabilities

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From the Editor's Desk

Shaun Jarrard



## Who's To Blame?

Amidst all the scientific inquiry into the coronavirus, we now know who to blame for the pandemic. Evangelical Christians, per the New York Times. I wonder if the NYT is aware that China, Iran, and Italy do not have large evangelical populations, yet they led the world in COVID-19 cases.

That opinion piece mentions the reluctance of a few churches to practice social distancing, then broadly brands believers as "science-deniers." Which of course makes it easy to blame Christians for whatever ails society. Listen, there's plenty of science denial going around these days. I sure the NYT would deny that a baby is a living, genetically independent human and thereby has the right to life, or that the universe began at a point in time and thereby could not have caused itself. But I digress.

Jesus spoke to the issue of finding someone to blame for a tragedy. He said, "Do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:4-5). His focus was not on specific fault, but the universal need for repentance. We are collectively and individually to blame for what's wrong in the world. We inherited Adam's sin and the whole earth groans and suffers for it, waiting to be set free (Rom. 8:20-22). Jesus is the second Adam, and from Him we inherit life (1 Cor. 15:45). That's why He calls you to repentance and faith.

We Christians accept the blame for being truthful. Paul defied political and religious sentiments saying, "At the name of Jesus every knee will bow...and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:10-11). Peter's narrow-minded claim was, "There is no other name (Jesus) under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Jesus dropped this bombshell, "Before Abraham was born, I Am" (John 8:58). That name was first revealed to Moses at the burning bush as the name of God. Such is our precedent for boldly declaring truth.

Somewhere on a dark road, a neon sign penetrates the night with its message, "Jesus Saves." Is that an anachronism from an

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



## Commissioner's Questions

**Q. You said the county would come out with new additional guidelines after the Governor presented his Executive Order? When will this happen?**

A. Our staff has been working for several days almost day and night coming up with a new amendment to the county COVID-19 Resolution. Unfortunately, when the Governor's Order came out last Thursday night to Shelter in Place, it not only prevents counties from making new Resolutions and Ordinances regarding COVID-19, but it cancels all that we have already made unless they match exactly the Governor's and some do. So, we are evaluating what we can do right now.

**Q. What is the main purpose of the Governor's Recent Executive Order?**

A. If you are confused about anything else, remember that the main purpose we should all be concerned about right now is "Shelter in Place" to help STOP the Spread of the Virus!

**Q. What does "Shelter in Place" mean?**

A. It simply means to STAY HOME (wherever that is) unless you have something very important to leave the home for. This includes going to an essential business or other business that is open, such as the grocery store, drug store, doctor's office or other store. You should not be visiting friends or having group gatherings unless there are under 10 people and you are practicing social distancing.

**Q. How long is this order in place?**

A. At this time, the Governor's Executive Order runs from 6 PM, Friday, April 3, 2020 until Monday, April 13, 2020.

**Q. Why is it important for me and my family to stay home?**

A. We are in a very critical stage of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading to others in our county. The only way to stop or slow the virus spread is to quit traveling to other locations within the county and stop being around other people.

**Q. What is considered important enough to leave home.**

A. The Governor has listed several places that are considered "essential". Those are listed in the Governor's Executive Order.

**Q. What is considered NOT a good reason to leave home.**

A. 1. It is not good to go to town to ride around and go into stores and do casual shopping. Know what you want, get in the

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



## COVID-19 Update

Information on the COVID-19 virus changes at such a rapid pace that it is very difficult to keep up to date. We are attempting to keep everyone informed as to the latest happenings and information. There are cases in just about every county in Georgia, including Union County.

It does not matter how many people have come and gone in Union County; the virus has spread. The furthest, rural counties who do not have beautiful mountains, hiking trails, and vacation homes still have virus spread in their area. That should give you an idea just how easy this virus spreads.

We are at a critical time. Some studies and models have shown that the number of confirmed cases and deaths in Georgia are on the rise with a peak in late April. That is why slowing down the spread rate is very important. This virus will spread. The risk is real and should be taken very seriously. We need to slow down the spread in order to not overwhelm our healthcare system. Lives may depend on it.

We have seen orders and actions from the national government down to the local level. The Governor of Georgia has issued an executive order "To Ensure a Safe & Healthy Georgia" which went into effect on Friday, April 3, 2020. The order is somewhat complicated, and everyone has questions as to what they can do; what they can't do; and what will stay open or close.

There are too many orders to review in this column but the main points that we want to stress are the social distancing, restrictions on gatherings, sheltering in place, and certain businesses are

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.

Jeremiah 17:14

## Letters to the Editor

### Brothers by Different Mothers

To the Editor,

I'm beginning to think Claud Rains Jr. and I are brothers by different mothers. Several times our letters share the same points of view. His letter about You Know Who was excellent, and stats correct. Adding to climate history, relatively recently a "tree" has been discovered under the Mendenhall Glacier, the fifth largest glacier in North America.

The constant keyboarder on climate change has touted House Bill HR 763 as the best way to handle the bleak future of climate change, "...creating jobs...while paying" citizens to do it.

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### On Behalf of Rural Georgians

Gov. Kemp,

Are you sure that the entertainment of those Georgians who live in our largest cities is more important than the health of those of us living in rural resort, lake, beach and state camping areas?

Most of the state of Georgia are rural areas with few grocery stores and very, very small hospitals and health care systems that are strained under the crash of bored Georgians looking to spend the weekend at the lake, beaches or in the mountains for a "change of scenery." You've proclaimed hiking and camping as "essential"

See Focke, page 5A

### Responding to Presidential Pride

To the Editor,

I would like to respond to a letter to the editor in last week's paper titled "Proud of Our President." The author says WHO said the mortality rate for COVID-19 was 3-4 percent while President Trump said it would be 1 percent. Well, the FACT is, as of right now (April 3), there are 1,026,974 cases worldwide with 53,975 deaths. That is a mortality rate of 5 percent. The United States currently has 245,175 cases with 6,059 deaths. That is a mortality rate of 2.47 percent. Clearly, BOTH WHO and President Trump have underestimated the seriousness of COVID-19.

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### Whose money are you spending?

"Dear Mr. President, As you are aware, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) received a \$75 million grant from the Federal Government as a part of the CARES Act. We believe that was misguided," Brent Bozell wrote....

You had two years. Way to go, Representative Collins!  
George A. Mitchell

## Shirley's Memories

Her earliest memories are of her favorite place in which to play. It was nothing more than an old clay pit where people would come to get clay to make pots or fill holes in the roads. There was a stream close to the pit which kept the area wet and made the clay easy to work. Each time the family gathered at Dad and Mommy Baker's place, all the kids would go off to the clay pit to play. All of her siblings, including Ray, Ralph, Carolyn and Debra, would go to play with many of her cousins, including Ralton, Rosette and Sherwon. They especially enjoyed playing at the place during the late summer, because there were Paw Paw trees nearby, and the first time she ate a Paw Paw was at this place. To this day, this is her favorite fruit. She still remembers enjoying the sweet taste on a sweltering summer afternoon while she and her cousins passed the time of day playing in the red clay.

Another place of which she was very fond was on the property of her grandfather, Dad Baker. He owned some bottom land along Little Bear Creek and Barnett Branch. This was a beautiful place. There was a beautiful old house set close to the Creek where you could sit on the porch while watching the lazy creek meander its way toward the Mon Dye Bottoms. She talks about the peaceful nature of the place, the cool waters of the creek and the beauty that can only come with a wildflower lined creek bank in the springtime. This beauty and peace at the place led two local churches, Blue Springs Missionary Baptist and Mount Olive Baptist, to use the water of Little Bear Creek as a baptizing hole.

The old house had been rented by Dad Baker to a family that were unlike most of the people in the local community of Churttown. These folks were not churchgoing people, and they enjoyed the local spirits (liquid) to much. A young couple in the community got saved and joined Blue Springs Church. A baptizing was held to bring the couple into the church and demonstrate their love for Christ. During the service, the people in the old house hooped, hollered and basically made fun of the people at the baptismal service. This did not sit too well with the local community, especially Tommy Baker. Soon, the family in the old house began having Saturday night parties at the old house. Every person with a bad reputation was noted for attending these parties. The parties grew in size each week, and the harassment of the local churches grew as well.

One Saturday, the Baker womenfolk were all out in the garden as were the children. The

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



## Garden Site Selection

As the temperatures are warming up, I know that more and more people are thinking about planting outside. Because of that, I want to talk about site selection for plants, and some general planting guidelines.

One of the most important things is when to plant. There are a couple of temperatures to keep your eye on. If you are planting from seed, you need to wait until soil temperatures have risen to 65 degrees at 4 inch depth. Planting seeds into soil that is too cold will reduce the germination of those seeds. Those seeds will be more affected by seedling diseases. In the next couple of weeks, we will start to have soil temperatures above 65. To check the soil temperatures you can go to georgiaweather.net. This website has a lot of good weather information. The weather stations that I would recommend using are the one in Blairsville and the one in Tiger.

The second temperature that needs to be checked is one that people are familiar with already. That is the air temperature. Annual plants that have already emerged are going to be susceptible to freezing temperatures. A killing frost for plants is when temperatures dip below 28 degrees. You can protect plants against those temperatures by placing a bucket, sheet, or floating row cover over them.

For site selection, you need 6-8 hours of full sun for a vegetable garden or annual ornamentals. Finding enough sun can be difficult in the mountains, but plants that don't have enough sun will be stressed. Stressed plants are going to be more susceptible to diseases and insects. They also won't produce as much or any fruit.

Another thing to consider is soil drainage. With the heavy clay soil that most sites have, this is a challenge. Some river bottoms will have a loamy clay soil that has better drainage. Tillage and aeration will improve soil drainage. Planting on a slope also improves soil drainage, because you will have more runoff. You don't want a slope that is too steep, because then erosion is a problem. In addition, if the slope is too steep it's difficult to get equipment in there, like a hand tiller.

Placing your garden close to a water source is also a good idea. A spigot nearby means that you can water when there is no rain. A good thing about clay soil is that the water holding capacity is much higher than other soils. However, if we have some dry spells as we did last year, plants will need to be watered. When watering, the water has to soak into the soil, down to the roots. Simply wetting the top of the soil won't provide

See J. Williams, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



## North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

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Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m. • Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - One Year \$40. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1988, at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.

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