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on whether to begin planning or not. This was not a decision that was made lightly. There is just no way to have these events and keep people safe and protected from possibly contracting the virus.

Q. Are there going to be any of the usual Christmas activities here in Union County?

A. While I am sure planning events is still going on by different organizations, I know currently two of the events around Christmas that will still be taking place this year. The Kris Kringle Market at the Farmers Market will be on Dec. 5 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and the Chamber of Commerce will be hosting their Holly Jolly Christmas at the Community Center on Dec. 5 starting at 9 a.m. Since this event will be held indoors, they will be following safety precautions

according to the Governor's guidelines regarding COVID-19. More information will be available on these events in the coming weeks.

Q. Is the Electronic Recycling and Document Destruction Event still taking place on October 24th?

A. Yes, as long as it is not raining, the Electronic Recycling and Document Destruction event will continue as planned in the front parking lot of North Georgia Technical College from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

If the forecast is showing a very high probability of rain for that day or if it is raining the morning of the event, then it will be cancelled. We will announce this on the Union County Facebook Page and also the Union County website at www.unioncountyga.gov.

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and take the necessary steps of wearing a mask and social distancing. Pretending the virus is not a very serious and viable concern or refusing to take it seriously is not going to make it go away any faster, no matter how hard we pray or wish it would.

Our residents have always come together as a "community" to help one another during times of need. How is it that the residents who don't wear a mask don't recognize that if ever there was a time for a community to come together, it is right now during our battle to defeat this pandemic? Is this not indeed the quintessential "time of need" for our community?

Lamar Paris, our Sole Commissioner, told me back in March, when our positive numbers were in the single digits, and again just the other day when our number of positive cases had risen to 843 (on Oct. 12), that "when and if we feel there is a serious problem, we can then consider alternative action, but we are not at that place in time now."

My question is, what exactly is the threshold for a "serious problem?" For it seems we are there or past it with the 843 positive cases and 22 deaths to date and numbers rising daily. It has been eight months now with not nearly enough people in our community adhering to the importance of wearing a mask or social distance, and as a result the virus has not gone away. That is a "serious problem." What HAS gone away are businesses, restaurants, jobs and lives. That is a "serious problem." So what exactly constitutes a "serious problem?"

Mr. Paris also responded to my question as to why a mask mandate could not be put in place in our community by saying, "We simply do not have the manpower to enforce such a rule without threatening the welfare of Union County residents."

My question is, isn't the lack of leadership and/or lack of a plan necessary to control an active pandemic in our community and lack of information as to what constitutes a "serious problem" after eight months exactly

that: the epitome of threatening the welfare of Union County residents? I disagree, Mr. Paris, we do have the manpower... it's called community responsibility! Be it individually or by our sheriff's deputies and police officers doing walkthroughs in our local stores as a deterrent to those who do not adhere to local mask-wearing rules, much like having officers sit in their patrol cars on the side of the road is a deterrent for potential speeders. We know all violators will not be deterred, but in contrast, even if just one mask violator is stopped, that has the potential of savings hundreds of lives.

It is disappointing and disheartening to realize that many residents do not have the wherewithal to do the right thing on their own and adhere to wearing a mask, therefore, additional mask mandates and officers patrolling our stores as a deterrent may in fact be a requirement. Whether or not you believe in the virus or the protection masks provide one another, sometimes one has to step up and do the right thing for the sake of others, even if that means you might be inconvenienced a little bit in the process.

We all need to be a role model of "community" responsibility. What have we got to lose except perhaps more loss of businesses, more loss of employment and more loss of lives?

"It is what it is -- COVID-19 affects virtually no one," says the President of the United States as over 213,000 Americans so far have fallen victim to this virus and died. Let's hope the next victim isn't one of you or one of your loved ones simply because putting on a mask while shopping indoors and practicing social distancing was just too much of a nuisance for you or a threat to your self-indulgent beliefs.

Thank you to all our residents who have looked beyond themselves and have done and continue to do the right thing on their own by wearing a mask and social distancing in order to protect the welfare of our community and curb this virus.

Jo Magee

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had got the best of the old peddler. Paul and Bud thought the old goat was the grandest thing they'd ever seen. The old goat must have thought he'd died and gone to heaven. Those two boys were always feeding the goat an apple or fresh green onions. The two young'uns loved the goat. They hugged and petted the goat constantly. They could hitch the wagon to the goat and ride it anywhere. They rode the wagon through the woods to their farm each and every day, and the goat never faltered. He loved pulling the wagon as much as the boys loved riding the wagon.

However, one day Poggy came for a visit. Poggy was my grandfather's fun-loving brother who drank too much. As usual, Poggy was drunk when he showed up at the farm, and he decided he wanted to ride the old goat. Without Granny's knowledge, Poggy got on the old goat and started spurring the goat's sides. At first the goat complied, but, soon Poggy got too rough. The goat began running full speed, and Poggy was laughing at the top of his lungs, when all of the sudden the goat stopped. But, Poggy didn't. He sailed over the head of the goat and into a ditch. Paul said, "Poggy climbed from the ditch and his entire face was bleeding."

He told the boys he was

Local Al-Anon meetings

For friends and families who are troubled by someone's drinking, please call 1-828-837-4440 or 1-888-425-2666 for local meetings. NT10c21Z1CA

going to kill that goat as my Granny walked up to the scene. The boys began crying, and Granny walked over to Poggy with her hoe handle extended. He was scared of Granny. All she did was look at him and he decided to leave. But, I guess the goat was still angry.

Later in the day Papa drew some water from the well and poured it into a big wash-tub so his sons could take a bath. For some reason, Papa bent over the washtub to move it and the old goat noticed the target of Papa's rear end. Without any hesitation and before anyone could stop it, the goat lowered his head and rammed Papa's butt. Papa went headfirst into that water. He must have been stunned, because it took him a minute to recover. When he popped out of the water, he turned and pointed his finger at the goat and said, "I will take care of you tomorrow." Paul and Bud knew exactly what that meant.

The next morning Lon Steele showed up at the house to swap a fresh cow for Granny's old milk cow. After they had negotiated, Lon told Granny, "OK, I will trade with you." Granny then asked Lon, "What will you give me for the goat?" Lon was surprised, but, he quickly said, "I will give you \$2 for it." Granny smiled and agreed to the deal. Once again, Granny had used her wiles to save the day. Although Paul and Bud were not happy about giving up their goat, they knew their Daddy would have "taken care of" the goat when he got home. Besides, each boy had a dollar to spend the next time the peddler came by their house.

Williams...

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and basal bark. Cut stump will require a saw for you to cut the plant down to just a couple of inches above ground level. Then apply the triclopyr or glyphosate at a strong concentration using a brush on directly onto the tree where the stump is exposed. It may be beneficial to include a dye spray indicator so that you can tell which stumps have been treated. Basal bark means using triclopyr ester at the base of the plant, spraying the herbicide in a ring on the base. Herbicide treatments work well with controlling privet, but they can still be time consuming. Whenever applying any kind of pesticide always read and follow the label instructions.

If you have questions about privet control contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Fowler...

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walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life" (John 8:12).

No, God doesn't judge wrongly. Nor does He make a referee's mistake. When Jesus stepped forward to accept your guilt and you accept that offer by believing and following Him, God judges you in the light of mercy. Step into that judgment Light!

Fire...

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a few tips for hikers to consider when enjoying the beautiful trails in Union County.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Chamber...

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who indeed are. If there is an issue blocked from social media, I hope it encourages us to go check out the facts for ourselves and even check sources that may not be our regular go-to spots for information.

The bottom line is this: in a day and age when we are bombarded with information from our phone, computer, and television screens, we must discipline ourselves not to believe everything that comes at us. We must be sure to do our research, to use the information we gain to determine what is good for our community, state and nation. When we find the information to be false, we must ask what else about that potential source is untrustworthy? And when we find it to be true, we must take note and value the character of the source.

While the Chamber is non-political when it comes to endorsing candidates, there are historical freedoms and traditions being taken from us daily. Now is as critical as ever for all our local residents to exercise their right to vote so that we can express our voice and maintain this country as it was founded, "One Nation Under God."

As always, check our website at VisitBlairsvilleGA.com for our calendar of events. It is true that many of the major county events have been cancelled, but our local merchants and churches are rising to the occasion. Let's show up at the polls, let's show up and shop local, and let's continue to be safe and wise.

**Bell Ringing Union
County Old Courthouse**



October 1, 2020
In memory of
Bill Meeks
on his birthday
by Terry and Ginger Meeks

October 22, 2020
In memory of
John J. Meeks
on his birthday
By Terry and Ginger Meeks

October 26, 2020
In Loving Memory of
Ricky Rivas
On the anniversary
of his death
We miss you,
Mom and Dad

October 27, 2020
In memory of
Chef Dave Drake
by Union County
Historical Society

**Bell ringing information
at 706-745-5493**