

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## Preparing for Wildfires

As a homeowner, you probably have not given much thought to wildfires and the risk that they have to your home. Wildfires can happen in our area, and homeowners should understand the causes and how to prepare their home for wildfire.

When people think of wildfire, they think of the images seen on TV where a large wall of fire is approaching a home. This can happen but is less likely than the real wildfire threat of flying embers. Embers are burning pieces of airborne wood and/or vegetation that can be carried through the wind and cause spot fires and ignite homes, debris, and other objects. These flying embers are the main reason for the majority of home fires due to wildfires.

Preparing your home for wildfire involves Vegetation Management and creating Defensible Space. Vegetation management involves limiting the amount of flammable vegetation near the home or in the "home ignition zone." This is known as creating a "defensible space."

According to The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the home ignition zone is broken into three zones: immediate, intermediate, and extended. The immediate zone includes the home and the area 0-5 feet from the farthest attached exterior point. This zone is the most important. To protect your home in this zone, start at the home and work outward. Some actions include cleaning roofs and gutters of dead leaves or pine needles; replacing or repairing any loose or missing shingles; installing 1/8 inch metal mesh screening in vents; and moving any flammable material from wall exteriors.

The intermediate zone ranges from 5-30 feet from the farthest exterior point. This is where planned landscaping or creating breaks can help decrease fire risk. A few action examples for this zone include clearing vegetation from under propane tanks; creating fuel breaks with driveways, walkways, and decks; removing ladder fuels (vegetation under trees) so a surface fire cannot reach the crowns; and proper tree and shrub spacing.

The extended zone includes 30-100 feet from the home. The goal is to interrupt the fire's path and keep flames smaller and on the ground. Actions in this zone include eliminating heavy accu-

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**Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief**

David Dyer



## Stay Focused

As of this writing, the election results are TBD. The levels of tension, angst, and rhetoric do not contribute to "a more perfect Union" as intended by the U.S. founders. How do Christians respond? Here are eight ways to focus your thoughts, whether your candidates win or lose.

1. Trust God. Even the U.S. motto makes that appeal. "In God We Trust." To borrow from Chuck Colson, our salvation will not arrive on Air Force One. We can trust Providence with the outcome of the election and the future of America. "Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God" (Psa. 20:7).

2. Remember where you ultimately belong. It's OK if you're not feeling very patriotic right now because, "Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). We are here for a moment, there forever.

3. Be humble in an active way. No gloating. "With humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves. Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).

4. Speak up and tell the truth kindly. Rod Dreher wrote a whole book called "Live Not By Lies." Deceptions hurt people. The Hebrew hero Mordecai cautioned Esther about remaining silent during their crisis. She had "attained royalty for such a time as this" (Est. 4:14). This is your time and place.

5. If you are stressed over politics, put those trials to work for you. Remember the hope found in Jesus' resurrection. Pray God helps you to endure with joy. "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance" (Jas. 1:2-3).

6. Love people, especially those who voted differently than you. Love, family, and friendships must be more important than politics. Don't sacrifice to the idol of politics. "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8).

7. Be an active part of a Christian community. Refuse to give in to the darkness of isolation. "If we walk in the Light as

**All Things New**

Wayne Fowler



See Fowler, page 5A

## Commissioner's Questions

**Q. Our neighbor has an old car parked near the road in our subdivision which violates our subdivision restrictions. Who enforces restrictive covenants in a subdivision?**

A. This is a very common question. The county has no involvement related to subdivision restrictions. Most restrictions require that either individuals or a homeowners association must enforce them. Generally, if someone is in violation of the restrictions, you might first want to gently let them know that they are in violation and ask them if they could comply. If that does not work, your only other recourse would be to consult with an attorney.

**Q. Who is responsible for the cost of an attorney to enforce restrictive covenants?**

A. Usually the homeowners association must pay the cost or some of the neighbors can go in together to pay the bill. However, if no others are interested, the financial burden would fall to you.

**Q. If a house is built on the edge of the Nottely River, I thought there had to be a 50' buffer between a building structure and the river. Why are some being allowed to build less than 50' from the river?**

A. Though it might appear that a home is less than 50' from a river, creek or stream, chances are, it is not. Sometimes they look closer as you ride by on the highway. Most projects require a survey first to verify setbacks and determine location of certain flood areas which may increase the setbacks to more than 50'. In addition, there are laws associated with trees remaining along bodies of water providing a shaded canopy. There are also other things that must be considered, but structures built prior to August 26, 1997 may be grandfathered in as they were built prior to adoption of the local ordinance. Oftentimes landowners may think that a gully or swale is not a body of water but may actually be considered one according to state guidelines. In this case, a property owner should contact the Union County Building & Development office for a stream determination: (706) 439-6045.

**Q. What is the difference between a floodplain and a floodway?**

**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**

Lamar Paris



See Paris, page 5A

## A Prayer for Older Folks

Lord, Thou knowest that I am growing older. Keep me from becoming talkative and possessed with the idea that I must express myself on every subject. Release me from the craving to straighten out everyone's affairs. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details. Give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips when I am inclined to tell of my aches and pains. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be wrong. Make me thoughtful but not nosy; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom and experience it does seem a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends left at the end. Amen!

(anonymous)

**Successful Mental Health**  
Dr. James Ray Ashurst  
PH.D.



## Chamber of Commerce

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended the Sporting Clays Tournament and Boo Bash at Meeks Park. Both events had fantastic turnout, and it was wonderful to see everyone enjoying themselves.

A special thank you to Greg and Emily Owenby, Noontootla Creeks Farms, and The Mill for hosting our Sporting Clays event. Congratulations to Chuck, Dave, Mark, and Stuart for finishing in first place! Kudos also to Chase, Ricky, and Mason for winning a Thanksgiving turkey provided by Jim's Smokin' Que and Ingles.

I'm pleased to share that a portion of the proceeds from the Sporting Clays event will go to support a local Veterans project or group. Thank you to Rose Auto Accessories, Inc. and North Georgia Heat Treat for sponsoring this event and helping the Chamber support our Veterans. Please take a moment to thank our Veterans for their service and consider attending one of the local Veterans Day

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**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**

Steve Rowe



## Letters to the Editor

### Deception Beware!

Dear Editor,  
As we look at our society, especially as the election is coming up, we can see deceit all around us. I hear so many say they don't know who to believe. There are those who are trying to confuse our young people into not knowing who or whose they are. We see videos of famous people who then take off the mask and it was just a prop. We know that AI easily deceives us, and I recently saw a commercial that gave this warning, as they too revealed they weren't who they appeared to be for most of the commercial, as they warned that false information may be given prior to the election about voting locations being shut down, for example. Identities can be stolen fairly easily, it seems. Who do we trust?

See Elliott, page 5A

### 5G Warts

Dear Editor,  
The U.S. Congress has funded billions of taxpayer dollars for Federal Communications Commission (FCC) programs such as the "5G Fund for Rural America," which has resulted in the rapid "overnight" implementation of 5G antennas hanging under powerlines everywhere. In general, 5G signals can reach only 1,500 feet without obstructions, so there are a lot of these unsightly 5G "warts" being installed through densification. According to FCC Chairwoman Rosenworcel, "If we want broad economic growth and widespread mobile opportunity, we need to avoid unnecessary delays in the state and local approval process. That's because they can slow deployment." That certainly appears to be true, because nobody asked us if we wanted this blight upon our communities. Electromagnetic Frequency (EMF) is poi-

See Campbell, page 5A

### Vote for Life Every Election

Dear Editor,  
Remember your first lick of delicious ice cream? Fun-filled birthday party? Snowflake tickling your nose? Best friend? Bike-riding lesson? Delightful dip in the ocean? High school dance, football game or heart-fluttering crush? Warm kiss? Driver's license and finally owning a vehicle, no matter its age or condition? Apartment? Roommate? Marriage proposal? What if your mother aborted you because you were thought of as a big inconvenience, a clump of tissue or inhuman, even though you had a heartbeat 21-23 days after conception? What if you were denied seeing a glorious sunrise or beautifully colored fall leaves?

See Phillips, page 5A

## Letters to the Editor

### Weather Control - An Observation

Dear Editor,  
Over a year ago, while hiking on Blood Mountain, I met a man from Zimbabwe/Rhodesia who trained in the U.S. to seed clouds, sometime in the '70s. His job, as a weather manager for the country, involved keeping a close eye on any clouds in the area, either to promote more rain or to dissipate a thunderstorm threatening to ruin the crops. (The U.S. has had weather control technology for use worldwide since the '70s, and of course these innovations would be upgraded and improved upon each year, with new inventions on the way.) For many years Zimbabwe earned the title: Bread Basket of Africa, exporting food to many other nations, feeding people throughout Africa. Burgeoning and overflowing store houses of produce and grains, bumper crops year after year were facilitated by weather control. "Jack" mentioned how he could seed and connect little clouds to each other to create a hundred-mile light, drizzly rain over the land. In a dry district of southern Zimbabwe, a reservoir rarely filled because rain wouldn't make it over the mountains. However, by seeding clouds, "Jack" was able to help the clouds over to the other side of the mountain range and fill the dam. For much of our conversation, Jack gave me statistics and data. My memory says, historically the dam had less than 5% capacity, but by seeding clouds, went up to a 60% fill rate. I stayed on a ranch in this region and the farms were quite productive in the '90s during transition stage, before total independence. When a torrential thunderstorm threatened to level fields of grain, his team cut the cloud in half by flying through it, the upper part breaking away and dissipating, enabling the lower half of the cloud to send a gentle rain. When "Jack" left Zimbabwe he took all

See Oakes, page 5A

### Re: Petition for 5 Member Board of Commissioners

Dear Editor,  
FINALLY!!! After 2 1/2 years of intimidation, harassment and threats by county officials, including our Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris and Sheriff Mack Mason, we have submitted the petition for a 5 member Board of Commissioners to be put on a ballot for the citizens to decide our future form of government. Thank you for your support and efforts in collecting over 4,000 signatures in spite of our "Elected" government officials trying to shut us down. We the people have the final say. Cindy Vandereedt

## Appalachian Dialect

I have known for many years that my talk is a little bit different than those people around me. And there have been a few times in my life where it was made clear to me that my dialect was different than others.

For example, when I was in grade school it was a custom at Osborn Elementary School for us to take a dime to school each Friday to buy a refreshing Coke in the afternoon on Friday. I was in the fourth grade when we moved to the area around Chickamauga, and my first Friday at the school I was told by the teacher to bring a dime to buy a Coke. I remember it being a hot day, and when the little bottles of Coke were delivered to each of us, I took a swig and placed the bottle on the desk. I looked at my friends and stated, "There is nothing better than a Coke dope." I didn't even know what dope was at the time. I had just heard an old timer use that phrase previously. All my friends looked at me as if I had lost my mind. Later I learned that the early formulation of Coke did contain cocaine.

On another occasion our class was reading aloud from a newspaper about Fidel Castro in Cuba, and occasionally Mrs. Morrison would stop to ask a question to make sure we were paying attention. She looked at me and asked, "Mickey Cummings, what do you think about Fidel Castro?" I responded, "He sounds a might quare, or maybe he is just turned funny." Everyone in the classroom burst into laughter. Mrs. Morrison saved the day by responding to the class, "I think Mickey means that Castro is a strange man."

Another time I was a young County Agent and I attended a national meeting of County Agents in Wyoming. A good friend was running for Treasurer, and the Georgia Delegation was trying to help him get elected. So, we held an event to help people to get to know Ron Atkinson. At the event we gave away Georgia Agricultural Products. My job was to give away samples of boiled peanuts. A man from Connecticut was given a bag and he promptly placed one in his mouth, shell and all. After chewing and eating the peanut he complained that it was tough. So, I showed him the technique of cracking open the shell and eating the nuts and then discarding the shell. He grinned and exclaimed that the peanuts were very good.

The lady behind him asked me a few questions and then moved on without taking

**Around The Farm**

Mickey Cummings



See Cummings, page 5A

## Composting

Compost is a welcome addition to any garden. It's a popular and effective method to improve the quality of your soil. It can also help you get rid of lawn debris such as grass clippings or leaves as they are falling. Composting is not difficult to do, but here are some tips so that you can start your own compost pile.

Compost is rich, dark humus that is the end product of the natural decomposition of plants or plant products. Using a compost pile will speed up the natural decomposition of plant material. Compost can improve soil drainage, structure, and help hold water and nutrients. The nutrients in compost will not be enough to replace fertilizing, but they can reduce fertilizing.

You can use just about any organic material for composting. Leaves, grass clippings, twigs, old annual or perennial flowers, old vegetable plants, straw, and sawdust can all be thrown into the compost pile. Try to avoid using insect or disease infested plants to reduce the spread of those plants the following season. You can put things like kitchen peelings and coffee grounds into the compost pile too. Kitchen scraps should be buried into existing compost so that they don't attract too many wild animals. Covering your compost pile will help keep animals out too. Avoid using highly processed foods because these will take longer to break down.

When making a compost pile, it's helpful to have something to contain it. A lot of different materials can be used from wire, fencing, wood pallets or concrete blocks. Leave some open spaces on the sides for ventilation. Good air circulation is important for successful compost. The bottom of the pile needs to be open to the soil to allow good drainage. Construct your pile in an out of the way place in your yard, in full sun.

Once you've constructed your container for the compost pile, start adding organic matter. Smaller pieces will decompose more quickly than large pieces of organic matter. Once you have a layer of organic matter in there, add in some garden soil or animal manure. These will add fungi, bacteria, insects, and worms to the pile. They're the critters responsible for breaking down the plant material into the humus that you add to your garden. You'll want to keep the pile moist, but not soggy.

Sometimes a concern with compost piles is that there might be an odor. If you turn the pile with a shovel at least once a month this

**UGA extension**

Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



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## Paris... continued from Page 4A

A. A floodplain refers to any land area that is susceptible to flooding. Officially, in Union County there are two designations of floodplain (Zone A & Zone AE). Specific building regulations for floodplains are determined by the designation. If a property owner plans to build in a floodplain, he/she should contact the Union County Building & Development office during the planning stages to ensure that proper regulations are provided: (706) 439-6045. A floodway is a channel of a river or waterway and the adjacent land area that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. A floodway references moving water, and nothing can be built in a floodway.

**Q. Why are people allowed to build houses in the floodplain and what about the sewage? How did they get a septic system approved?**

A. Homes being built in special flood hazard areas can be a lengthy and complicated process. Some require a survey to determine base flood

elevation to ensure the height of finished floor and electrical equipment are installed above potential flood waters. In order to achieve these elevations, many homes require flood vents and special foundations in order to build structures in these areas. A septic system can be installed in a flood plain. It is not recommended, but if the soil type is adequate, it is allowed by state law.

**Q. What if the river floods? What will happen to the sewage?**

A. Most people really do not understand how a septic system works. First, all the solids are deposited into your septic tank. They remain there, and most are gradually dissolved by bacteria. Only the remaining liquid (mostly water) enters the drain fill line. When constructed properly in good soil types, these liquids are rapidly absorbed into the soil and evaporate into the atmosphere. Flood waters, if they remained high for a couple of days, would certainly affect the percolation of the soil, but should not affect the contents of the septic tank that is buried.

## Elliott... continued from Page 4A

The Bible says in John 8:44 that the devil "is a liar, and the father of it." Titus 1:2 says that God "cannot lie." 1 Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." We are the prey, and the devil is the hunter. Revelation 12:9 says, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world..."

We need to keep our minds clear so we can critically think. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." What better way for the devil to deceive us than to impair our minds? There are many physical reasons why alcohol as a beverage and abusive, addictive drugs and habits such as pornography hurt us, but many don't realize there is a spiritual curse that is put upon us if we partake. These are doorways that give Satan legal ground into your life. Not only that, but did you know the

Bible says in Habakkuk 2:15, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also"? If you are selling it in your stores or restaurants, you are guilty and a woe is upon you by the LORD!

We do not need alcohol or abusive drugs to relax or have a good time. There are plenty of other comfort foods and drinks that do not put a curse upon your life, that do not impair your mind or make you an easy prey for the devil. Understanding how he works helps us to not be manipulated or deceived. Stand strong! See your health care provider, pastor, rehab center, or a trusted friend for help. Pray to the Lord for help and strength as He will give it if you repent and come humbly before Him. Let's work hard to be a community that spends our money on things that promote health and safety, not wickedness, deceit, and trouble. Trust me: Satan does not have your best interest at heart. God does.

**Dawn Elliott**

## Campbell... continued from Page 4A

soning each of us as our bodies cannot evolve fast enough to tolerate it, some people more than others. Symptoms such as insomnia, headaches, tinnitus, vertigo, nausea, heart palpitations, body aches, hand and face numbness and sporadic flu symptoms are all indications of EMF overexposure.

Nikola Tesla, the inventor of alternating-current electricity, radio, fluorescent lights, remote control, robotics and the electric motor, found himself experiencing all of the above symptoms later in life and is possibly the first victim of EMF poisoning from his experiments. Cellphones and towers, WiFi, 5G, wireless and power lines all contribute to EMF poisoning.

A U.S. National Toxicology Program \$25 million, two-year study found clear evidence linking RF radiation to cancer, including malignant brain tumors (gliomas) and heart tumors (schwannomas) in animal studies. The Inter-

national Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified non-ionizing EMFs as possible human carcinogens, while some view it as known carcinogens. A 2022 Polish Department of Environment study of honeybees exposed to man-made EMF found bees can lose their ability to pollinate and navigate, which threatens our food supply.

The FCC continues to rely upon outdated safety guidelines established in the 1990s, which consider only the thermal effects of RF-EMF and not the non-thermal biological effects such as DNA damage, oxidative stress and cellular dysfunction, which pose significant health risks, especially to children. The FCC must immediately update its safety guidelines to reflect current scientific understanding and place an immediate halt to 5G expansion and prioritizing public health over corporate profits.

**Pat Campbell**

## Phillips... continued from Page 4A

Discovering Santa? Finding money the Tooth Fairy left? Snuggling with grandma? A sports lesson from grandpa? Christmas and birthday presents? Holding an energetic, squirming puppy? A magnificent wedding day? Watching a baby take the first step? Gone because your mother selfishly aborted you.

What if life's joys, ups and downs, failures and successes never happened because your earthly existence was ended before you could experience these natural human events? There would be no memories, family or friends.

Today, abortion for convenience is commonplace. Now there's talk to also slaughter infants following birth. Yet, someone who kills a woman's

unborn child is held accountable and jailed for homicide. Where is the justice? This hypocrisy makes no sense.

If you believe in God, recall Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you." And Psalm 139:13, "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb."

We and America are drastically paying the consequences for more than 63 million babies murdered here, most for self-serving reasons.

Wisely vote for life and those who support it in every election. God will not be mocked! Whether you believe in Him or not.

**Tamara Phillips**

## Williams... continued from Page 4A

will reduce the smell. A good functioning compost pile will heat up from the activity of the microbes decomposing organic matter. The heat produced will kill off the odor causing bacteria. If you add manure to your pile there will be some initial odor, but as the pile matures the smell will go away. A well maintained compost pile should not have a strong odor.

Once the compost has a

crumbly earth look and you can no longer recognize the plant material it's ready to be added to the garden. If you add the organic material over time the compost will become ready a little at a time. If you have questions about creating or maintaining your compost pile contact your county Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

any peanuts. I gave out other peanuts to many people and then this same lady shows up and asks more questions about the peanuts. Again she leaves without taking anything from me. But, then she shows up again later with four of her friends. Again she asks questions about Georgia peanuts. Finally, I ask why she continues to come through the line without taking any peanuts. She and all her friends begin to smile and she says, "We just love to hear you talk."

I have a great friend in Kansas that is also a County Agent. He and I both served as officers in the National Association of County Agricul-

## Fowler...

**continued from Page 4A**

He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another" (1 Jn. 1:7).

8. Represent God's mission in the world. "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

As believers we know the truth and it has changed our lives. We have a mission and calling from God to be light in this world. This election does not change who we are and what we do. So, stay focused. [www.mountainchristian.net](http://www.mountainchristian.net)

## Dyer...

**continued from Page 4A**

mulations of ground debris; removing dead plant and tree material; removing vegetation adjacent to storage sheds or other outbuildings; and proper tree spacing.

These are a few tips and actions that a homeowner should perform to reduce the risk of losing a home to a wildfire. For more information, please visit <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa>.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

## Chamber...

**continued from Page 4A**

ceremonies next Monday.

Lastly, a big shout-out to Union County College and Career Academy (CCA) for achieving their 5-year certification! The CCA has been recognized for their innovative approach to training our students for the next phase of their lives, addressing the future workforce needs of our community.

Happy Veterans Day! Thank You for your service and for the sacrifices of your families. Because of you, life is better in Blairsville and the USA!

## Oakes...

**continued from Page 4A**

his data to Australia, to share with them his success, to enable others to profit from his own trial and errors, to feed more of the world. And he told others. But he couldn't get anyone interested.

Looking at some patents, U.S. weather control engineering started around 1891, 1914 and 1920 – to make rain or fog. Think of the usefulness of a dense fog in a war situation. The patents continue right up to the present, easily found on Google. 2001 has a patent for hurricane and tornado control. 2023 has a patent for rain simulation owned by an automotive company.

Automotive companies historically want military contracts. Who uses this technology of rain or drought control and what is the agenda? America, land of the free and brave, hasn't had the benefit of using weather modification to help the farmer feed the world. Presently, weather modification seems to be used against our own population: snow in California and torrential rains, our recent hurricanes, Helene gaining in strength over land. And if it's used here, what's happening around the world by engineering the weather?

For most of the world, weather control has been about subjugation rather than enriching the lives of billions. If one small country in Africa, fed Africa for approximately 50 years, we can easily imagine a world without hunger. Right now, below the Sahara in Africa, 3.2 million children under the age of five, die from hunger.

Insisting on transparency is a step in the right direction and taking ownership of our tax dollars, insisting on knowing where those tax dollars go. Is the government, of the people, by the people, for the people or do we switch out people and put in corporations?  
**Nancy R. Oakes**

living in the region have one thing in common. The way they talk is more similar to Chaucer and Shakespeare than to modern day English. Early settlers were isolated and remained so until recently. There was very little travel in and out of this area until the 1950s. Therefore, the language and dialect of the area changed very little during the first 200 years of our history. That is why you can go to Pennsylvania and hear someone refer to a group of others as yinz. While someone from the southern Appalachians

would say yu'ns as in, "Hope yu'uns are well."

However, after all the changes we have experienced in the last 50 years, all of that is disappearing. Our children have experienced much change in their lifetimes, and I am sad to say that as Zell Miller's book reveals, our Appalachian language is "Purt Nigh Gone."

If you get a chance read

his books, they are wonderful

and will give you a great appreciation for our dialect and the customs we all share in the Appalachians.