



## Paris... continued from Page 4A

### something about this?

A. No. Construction materials do not fall under the junkyard ordinance. Items that are on someone's property for the purpose of repairing the home or completing construction projects are perfectly fine to be there. Also, materials that are being used to operate a business are not considered junk either. These items do not fall under the definition of a junkyard.

### Q. I understand household trash in people's yards does not fall under the Junkyard Ordinance, but who do I contact for this problem?

A. Household trash that is left out in the open can be a health hazard and should be directed to the Environmental

Health Office at 706-781-3824. Household trash, such as rotten food or food containers could potentially cause disease. Rodents and other pests can get into it, causing other issues. Household trash cannot remain out in the open without being confined or in a secure container.

*Keeping our county in a neat and clean condition should be important to all citizens. So, if we all do our part, it should be simple. The same can be said for noise issues. We should all be considerate of our neighbors and how our loud sounds could negatively impact them. Please help keep government out of your business where we do not want to be. Thank you.*

## Habitat... continued from Page 4A

but you make it a home.

I've never owned a house before, I don't know what's involved. We have a "Family Support" committee that helps all our homeowners, even after the house is completed. You will have a person working with you to answer any questions about home maintenance, and help you solve any problems that may arise. You will have a team of cheerleaders

throughout the whole life of the mortgage, helping you have a successful experience.

Where do I start? Stop by the Habitat Office, located inside the ReStore at 225 Wellborn Street, Blairsville, GA. You can pick up an application, fill it out, and bring it back by Jan. 7, 2022. If you have any questions, or need help, just call 706-745-7101, and someone will help you.

## Smythe... continued from Page 4A

missioner is only accepting questions and comments at the 12/3/21 public hearing and not the second reading on Dec. 13, 2021, where he reads, approves and slaps the gavel for his proposed budget without further public comment.

The proposed budget generally shows the expenditures for a number of areas. Curiously, no "Reserve Fund" category was shown. We were informed that it was included somewhere in the "Transfers to Other Funds," a category which constitutes nearly 25% (over \$5 million) of the total County budget. Citizens were told that part of the previous 17% millage increase was to replace reserve funds that were likely used to fund two unbudgeted land purchases (shoe factory and hospital site) and the county's portion of the nearly \$2.5 million semi-private gun range. None of these expenditures had

been identified or budgeted, but presumably paid for through the reserve fund within the "Transfers to Other Funds" cache.

Reserve Funds and the expenditures within this fund need to be identified and not become just a giant slush fund to pay for the Sole Commissioner's pet projects without public knowledge or input. Burying 25% of the budget from public scrutiny is not an open and transparent government. After all, it is our money, even though he refers to it as one of his "pots of money." How about some transparency and accountability for the buried 25% of the budget?

On a bright note, the Sole Commissioner did not threaten or eject any Union County citizens from the meeting. That's an improvement over his recent reactions to challenges to his policies and sole decisions.  
**Johnathon Smythe**

## Nichols... continued from Page 4A

as well as causing long term property damage from toxic chemicals.

Houses where a meth lab was in operation can retain chemicals which are hazardous to those who live in the house afterwards. In fact, even use of the drug within an apartment, home, or trailer can cause negative health effects long after the user or producer has moved one.

More and more communities each year deal with this problem and it is an expensive thing to repair, with decontamination costing thousands of dollars to inhabitants and landlords both. These problems are far from victimless with acute health effects that include lack of coordination, chest pains, and burns to skin, eyes, nose, and mouth. Possible chronic

long-lasting problems may include respiratory irritability, neurological damage, and liver and kidney damage.

In these times it is important that families are aware of both the signs of methamphetamine use and abuse. In addition, community members need to be on the lookout for signs their house was used prior for methamphetamine production or use. To learn more about Methamphetamine effected houses visit <https://www.safewise.com/blog/tell-buying-meth-house/>.

For more information on signs of methamphetamine abuse, visit our website at <https://www.narcononnewliferecovery.org/drug-abuse-information/signs-of-methamphetamine-abuse.html>.  
**Luke Nichols**

## Duket... continued from Page 4A

Atlanta several times a year to visit friends. I can reassure you that our community in no way resembles the mayhem of Atlanta.

I wake up every day grateful for the peace and serenity of our beautiful city and county. Driving to town several times a week, or to my favorite fishing spots in our national forests, I look at our green pastures, lush forests, rolling hills, cattle grazing in the fields and feel I have been transported back in time to the 1950s of my childhood. I thank God for allowing me the privilege to live in this great area where waving America flags are commonplace. I certainly understand why throngs of people from the northern states or Florida are

clamoring to move here.

Rather than being grumpy about the minor inconveniences cited in the letter (waiting to be served at restaurants or too many cars on Hwy. 129), I take those moments to reflect on the friendliness and courtesy of the people with whom I interact every day. Try finding a driver in the Atlanta suburbs who will stop to let you merge into heavy traffic or wave you into a parking spot on which they also had their eye.

To the writer of the letter, I can only offer this advice. Chill out and be grateful. You'll be a lot happier in the long run.  
Sincerely,  
**Joe Duket**

## Georgia Mountains Regional Commission invites public input

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission (GMRC) is assisting Union County and the City of Blairsville with the update of their Joint Comprehensive Plan, the State required document that helps shape and coordinate local work programs for the local governments.

The online survey remains accessible through December 31, 2021. Anyone wishing to participate should visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C22N8VX> or find the link on the web site for each local government.

There will be two more public forums open to all residents, as listed below. Both of

these events will run from 4-7 PM and are walk-in/walk-out style forums where people are free to come at any time, visit multiple stations to review materials, submit questions or comments, and then leave at their leisure.

Monday, December 20, 2021 in room 101 of the Union County Recreation Center (129 Union County Recreation Road).

Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at the Pat Haralson Memorial Civic Center (165 Wellborn Street).

Any questions about the public involvement process can contact Adam Hazell at the GMRC as listed above.

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

has a way of healing many sore spots. As the years went by, John became more and more feeble. He made things right with my great-grandfather. Lon was always close to his father even though he couldn't understand why his Dad had left his mother. So, one Christmas he invited John to come home and spend some time with his family.

The whole family was invited for Christmas dinner. Some came and some refused. There was still much bitterness among some of his sons.

Lon's oldest daughter, Mabel (Papa's sister), had an idea. She bought her Papa a brand new pair of overalls. She asked everyone to bring a gift for the old man. Mabel gathered all the gifts and stuffed them into the overalls.

Next she sewed the leg openings together so the gifts would not fall out. John was so old he had trouble seeing, but, he knew the overalls were

new so he tried to put them on. But, he could not get his leg into them. So, he turned them upside down and reached his arm into the legs and began pulling out his gifts. Old John soon had about 10 gifts lying at his feet.

Papa said the old man had tears running down his face, and yet he was laughing at the same time. The old man got more than he bargained for that Christmas. He received the gifts and the forgiveness of some of his family.

I think that is why Papa loved Christmas. He was able to experience firsthand the true meaning of Christmas.

He watched his grandfather that year and realized it is never too late to receive the love of your family. Is that not the true meaning of Christmas? We give gifts to people to demonstrate our love for them in the same way Christ gave himself for us.

## Chamber...

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all they do!

While you are out that way, you might as well make a pit stop at Sunrise Grocery for their famous boiled peanuts, Jessica's soaps, and some Appalachian gifts. You could make a day of these two places, Vogel State Park and Sunrise Grocery, what an experience!

As of press time we did not have the final tally for the winners of the Tour of Trees and the Gingerbread Contest but tune in to our What's Up, Blairsville Facebook Live on Friday, December 17th or check our website and social media for the winners. Everyone outdid themselves this year. The Tour will continue until after Christmas so bring the family and check out the trees, wreaths, and gingerbread village before they are gone.

It's great to live in Blairsville and I hope you all have a blessed holiday season.

## Ripma...

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saying a criminal should not be held accountable if he commits a crime intended to slander Donald Trump? Or are you saying that the 12 jurors who unanimously found Smollett guilty are racists and bigots? Or, and I think this is your real intent, are you saying that Republican Conservatives who support Trump are emboldened by the guilty verdict to stand for truth, justice and the American Way?

To read Stafford's complete article visit: <https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/jussie-smollett-being-found-guilty-hoax-will-hurt-lgbtq-folks-n1285638>.

**John Ripma**

## Maloney...

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2021 is expected to be at least 5%, the strongest annual economic growth in over 40 years. Over 456 million COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered, and over 70% of American adults are now fully vaccinated. The unemployment rate has dropped 2% since last year, down to 4.6%.

There is a lot to be celebrated as we enjoy the holiday season and look forward to moving forward in a positive way. Happy Holidays everyone!

**Michelle Maloney**

## Kusuk...

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Seems to me those of us who live out that way should have some say, but to date, that has not happened. I dread the idea of having to make a U-Turn, so I hope the Department of Transportation reads our concerns, and if they put in the turn, I hope there is a good distance for all of us to turn onto a highway with a 65 mph speed limit without having a close call every time we do it.

**Gayle Kusuk**

## Daniel...

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commissioners at a time every time they messed up through the group-think ideal that you seem to like!

Plus, the added expense of three or five salaries would be added to our county budget. This would surely cause a raise in taxes to cover the extra expense.

We have never seen anything work well that is a product of a committee.

Thank you,

**HH Daniel**