Opinions

Everybody has one... **Emergency Medical Responses**

the maximum penalty.

Union County firefighters perform many duties to help protect the citizens of Union County. One of the duties is to respond to medical calls. Medical calls make up over 65% of the department's responses. A medical call can range from traumatic injuries from an accident to various medical emergencies. Union County Fire Department does not transport patients to the hospital however; we do respond and assist Union Fire Dept.

from Union

County

Fire Chief

Dyer

General Hospital Ambulance Service. The ambulance service provides emergency medical treatment and transport. On any given day, there may be 10-12

Firefighters of Union County Fire Department are trained to respond

to these medical calls. The levels of training start at the basic level of Emergency Medical Responder and go up to Paramedic. We also have several nurses and physician assistants on the department that respond as well. These firefighters respond to a medical call and perform emergency treatment prior to the ambulance arrival. Firefighters also assist the EMTs and Paramedics on scene to stabilize the patient for transport.

Firefighters may be trained to the minimum basic level of Emergency Medical Responder (EMR). The EMR class involves approximately 80 hours of medical training. Upon completion of the course, students must pass practical scenarios and the National Registry EMR written test. Firefighters may also take the more advanced medical training of Emergency Medical Technician - Basic, Advanced, or Paramedic.

Volunteer Emergency Medical Responders are dispatched to every medical call. Additionally, the career firefighters respond to all major trauma or medical calls. Career firefighters are required to be trained to the minimum level of Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B). EMRs respond in their private owned vehicle and career firefighters respond in a Fast Response Vehicle. There may be rare occasions where the career firefighters respond in a fire engine

Emergency medical response is just one of the many duties and services that the firefighters of Union County Fire Department perform. Volunteers and career firefighters dedicate their time to become trained in emergency medical treatment. We are very proud

See Dyer, page 5A

The Forgiver

Rachael Denhollander had her day in court. She spoke not only to the doctor, Larry Nassar who abused over 150 young gymnasts in his care, but also to the judge, other victims, and to

Her most quoted statement to Nassar is, "I pray you experience the soul-crushing weight of guilt so you may someday experience true repentance and true All Things forgiveness from God, which you need far more than forgiveness from New me - though I extend that to you as well." This was in the context of her

oft repeated theme, "How much is a little girl worth?" as she argued for

One might ask, if she is willing to forgive him, why ask the judge to throw the book at Nassar? In short, because forgiveness not mean there are no consequences.

Denhollander argued that the victims have value. For the judge to let Nassar go would be tantamount to declaring that his crimes didn't matter, nor did the young gymnasts' shattered lives. In fact, the judge would be irrelevant too, if he did not impart justice. Consequences affirm that judges, crimes, and little girls This illuminates the Christian message of substitionary

atonement, i.e. Jesus dying on the cross for your sins. The ques-

tion is, if God wanted to forgive, why didn't he just do it with-

out that bloody execution 2000 years ago? For God to just "let it

go" would mean that morality doesn't matter. If morality doesn't matter, i.e. what people do to themselves and to others, then people don't matter and even God is irrelevant. No, Divine justice requires consequences for sin. Enter Jesus. As the only mediator between God and people, "gave Himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:5-6) to release you from the penalty of sin. In other words, God presented Christ as a sacrifice through the shedding of his blood to demonstrate his righteousness, "so that He would be just and the justifier of the

forgive you. The forgiven becomes the forgiver in God's trickle down

See Fowler, page 5A

one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:21-26). As God is righteous

and just, a price must be paid. Jesus paid it all so the Father could

Commissioner's Questions

Q. What is ESPLOST?

A. It stands for Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. It is one of the seven pennies in sales tax you already pay for every dollar you spend in Union County.

Q. Is ESPLOST the same thing as SPLOST?

A. These are exactly the same thing except ESPLOST is strictly for education purposes. Q & A The Board of Education makes all the decisions regarding what projects will be completed utilizing ES-Commissioner PLOST, not the county government. SPLOST projects are the decision of Paris the County.

Q. How do we select to have a SPLOST or ESPLOST? A. They are both decided on by the voters of Union County

referendum being placed on the ballot. Q. When does the election happen for them?

A. ESPLOST will be voted on by the public at the primary election on May 22, 2018. SPLOST will either be voted on at the general election in November or sometime next year. This decision has not been made yet.

Q. How often do we vote on these sales taxes? A. The county SPLOST sales tax lasts for six years when the city is included to receive a portion of the funds. The school ESPLOST sales tax collection period lasts for 5 years. So, each time the 5 years is close to being up, ESPLOST has to be voted on

again in order for the tax to continue being collected. Q. Will voting for these two issues raise our sales tax? A. No. You are already paying the one penny for SPLOST and the one penny for ESPLOST out of the 7% sales tax we currently have. These have been collected for years. It is the same tax that just has to be voted on each time the collection period is

Q. Why do we have to vote on this every few years instead of it being permanent.

close to ending.

A. The Georgia Legislature wanted to be sure that counties and school systems properly use the money. If we do not use the money like the public thinks is proper, then they may vote against it when it comes up for a vote again.

See Paris, page 5A

Drug Free Mountain Life

The Teen Vaping Trend

With the recent Monitoring the Future Study release indicating that nearly one in three high school seniors reported using a vaping device in the past year, it's imperative that parents

are informed of the potential dangers that can result from

Vaping is the act of inhaling and sol, often referred to by an e-cigarette or

paign supports an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to exhaling the aero- children, families, and community toward prevention as vapor, produced of illegal substance abuse.

similar device. It's become more popular among teens than regular cigarettes, especially given that vaping devices can be used for anything from flavors like mango, mint or tutti frutti, to flavorings containing nicotine or THC, the chemical compound in marijuana that produces the high. There are several risks to vaping for teens.

Below are three major ones for parents to be con-

See Drug Free, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Awake America

lives in the Blairsville area to come to City Hall

for the Awake America prayer meeting every

first Thursday of the month at 11:59. Our mayor

Conley and other Blairsville officials attend with

a few pastors and many faithful church believ-

ing saints of God. My main reason for writing

this article is to encourage local pastors, associ-

ate pastors and youth pastors to set aside time

to attend these prayer meetings which is vital

to our community and to show your support for

this worthwhile ministry that was coordinated by

Lydia Long about 10 years ago and she has many

locations in a radius of 150 miles, even into Ten-

go to Lydia's website awakeamerica.info and see

more of her amazing work she has done, not only

for the Blairsville area, but the surrounding areas

as well. Pastors please pray and heed the Holy

Spirit's leading and come and share this joyous

prayer time with like-minded believers who love

the Lord God and love to gather with the saints

of our Most High God. See you next month on

the 1st of March. Thanks and God bless your

Sadly too true...

loved old friend, Common Sense, who has

been with us for many years. No one knows

for sure how old he was, since his birth records

were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He

will be remembered as having cultivated such

rain; Why the early bird gets the worm; Life

isn't always fair; And, maybe it was my fault.

financial policies (don't spend more than you

can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not

when well-intentioned but overbearing regula-

tions were set in place. Reports of a 6 year old

boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school

for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher

fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only

they themselves had failed to do in disciplin-

See Little, page 5A

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that

Today we mourn the passing of a be-

Knowing when to come in out of the

Common Sense lived by simple, sound

His health began to deteriorate rapidly

An obituary printed in the London Times...

ministries as well in Jesus name. Amen

Frank F. Combs

valuable lessons as:

children, are in charge).

worsened his condition.

ing their unruly children.

Absolutely Dead Brilliant!

If you need any more information you can

I would like to encourage everyone that

How to Fund Wildfire Response

Western lawmakers are pushing for Congress to address funding and management challenges at the U.S. Forest Service as the government struggles to respond to an extreme year for wildfires. Democrats and Republicans represent-

ing states affected by wildfires say the problem demands the same attention as recent hurricanes. as fires have become larger, more frequent, deadlier, and



costlier, forcing the Forest Service to borrow from other government accounts when money runs out. Fixing fire borrowing and providing the Forest Service with the funding it needs to prevent and put out wildfires is a bipartisan idea and has been from the beginning. But lawmakers disagree (imagine that) on how to address the funding problem, with some pushing for any fix to be matched by forest management reforms that they say will address the root causes of fires and prevent them from being started in the first

'By returning responsible management practices to our forests, we will improve forest health, reduce escalating suppression costs, and lower the risk of catastrophic wildfire threatening communities and the environment", says Rep. Rob Bishop, Chairman of the House Natural Resource Committee. "Over the long term, new funding without the management component is futile". The committee is discussing how to respond to a wildfire season that has burned more than 8 million acres, about 2.5 million more than in an average year. The severe year for wildfires comes after more than 10 million acres burned in 2015, the worst fire season in decades.

But this year's fires are different, and more urgent, because fires are increasingly burning close to homes and people as the West becomes more populated. From California to Utah and Montana, thousands of people have been forced to evacuate their homes this fire season. The largest wildfire in Los Angeles history this month forced hundreds of residents to evacuate, with the fire burning more than 5,000 acres.

Experts say that the human element is one of a confluence of factors that have increased the cost of firefighting response. In the past, everybody thought fire was a bad thing, so they put out all these small fires, which built up fuel levels in forests. Throw in climate change, longer fire seasons, and millions of houses being built in the Western landscape, and that has made firefighting more expensive. As costs have risen, Congress has tried for years to fix the funding mechanism for fighting forest fires but has failed to find consensus. This month, legislation will

See Riley, page 5A

Derek Richards Advertising Director

Lily Avery

Lowell Nicholson

Mamma's Trip to Town

My mother was looking forward to her first trip to town. She was nearly 8 years old and had never been to town; at least she couldn't remember when she had been to town. Anyway, her grandparents, Dad (Charlie) and Mommie

(Alvie Baker) were going to Russellville on Saturday. They had invited their granddaughter and my mother to make the 25 mile trip to Russellville.



This was no small task in 1948. The only transportation the family had was a log truck.

That hot July day began early in the morning. Mother said it took nearly an hour to make the trip. Mom said she sat in the middle and watched her grandfather change the gears as they drove down the road. Mom watched Dad as he expertly shifted the gears and applied the brakes to keep them all safe as he encountered the steep hills and curves of Ray Mountain. She said, "I was scared going down that mountain on that old dirt road. But, Mommy Baker's kind and gentle hands reassured me everything would be okay."

Mother remembers the day as being grand and wonderful. She said, "I can still remember the smell of new clothes in the James Department Store and the smell of new shoes and fresh leather in Watsons. I can still see all those new toys in White's 10 Cent Store.

The old Roxy Theater was located just down the street and I can remember going in there and watching Gary Cooper in an old western movie." Mom remembered going to the diner and eating lunch. She also told me there were people from all over the county in town that day. Dad Baker went to get a haircut at the Russellville Barber Shop. While he was there he caught up on all the latest political news of the county. While Dad was in the Barber Shop Mommy went to the Beauty Shop where she was able to catch up on the local news as well. Mom said she had the grandest time of her life. She had never seen so many people in one place. She told me there must have been 1,000 people in town that day.

Just before lunch Mom and her grandparents saw the Dubois ladies in the Five and Dime Store. Minnie, the mother, Petunia and Bessie are the same group that shot at my great Uncle Pick because he brought them some food which they consumed quickly and they became extremely sick. Therefore, they thought Uncle Pick had poisoned them.

Aunt Minnie was the smallest of the three rather large ladies. And that is putting it kindly. Pearl and Petunia were twice the size of Minnie. However, all 3 ladies were friendly and had the most beautiful clothes. But, sometime they could

See Cummings, page 5A

In 2018 the Chamber is focusing on making certain that our current members and prospective members understand and utilize the full scope of benefits available to them. One of the most overlooked benefits is participation in "Drugs Don't Work". Members

Drugs Don't Work Program

will save 7.5% on their annual workcompensation insurance premiums by choosing to opt in to this excellent, drug prevention

Blairsville Chamber Al Harper program. A common misconception is that this

benefit is only useful to larger employers. We do however, have members with only a small number of employees that are getting the savings on their workers' compensation insurance through By participating, members will work with

our local Drugs Don't Work coordinator, Dawn Saraney, to put together a substance abuse policy that meets state compliance guidelines. Employers will also learn how to determine appropriate drug testing procedures, implement employee

See **Harper**, page 5A

Bluebirds

Once referred to as "blue robins" because of their vibrant blue hue and rust colored chest, bluebirds are a desired addition to any homeowner's backyard. Because of numerous challenges, most importantly loss of habitat, these charis-

matic little birds have been facing a population decline. However, you can promote the presence of bluebirds on your property by crafting houses for them and maintaining a bluebird-friendly habitat.



Bluebirds eat insects such as grasshoppers, crickets and caterpillars, as well as berries during the colder months when insects are not as abundant. They are also cavity dwellers, meaning they normally nest in tree holes. However, as development increases, the number of trees suitable for bluebird nests is rapidly decreasing. Homeowners can help to combat this problem by placing their own bluebird houses. Installing a bluebird house is much more complicated than nailing a birdhouse to a tree, though. In order to ensure that bluebirds will be the one living in the happy little home you provide for them, you need

When building the house, use untreated wood that is about one inch thick. Pine, cedar, and cypress are all good choices. If you would like to paint the house, choose a light color as it will reflect the sunlight and prevent the shelter from becoming too hot. Also be sure to provide small ventilation holes at the four corners of the bottom to allow air movement and any accumulated rainwater to escape. Make an entry hole of about one inch but do not provide a perch for the house. Bluebirds do not use perches, so this will only encourage other species to inhabit your houses. Contact our extension office if you would like a publication that includes plans for how to build a bluebird house.

to make sure it is well suited to their needs.

After the house is built, it is important to choose an appropriate place to install it. It is always best to put bluebird houses on their own separate pole with a conical shield on it to minimize the chances of a predator such as a snake climbing the post. Houses should be placed about six feet above the ground and at least 100 yards apart because bluebirds are very territorial when nesting. The entry should also face southeast to protect the nesting birds from winds. Once nesting and breeding season has ended, it is important to clean out the box to ensure the return of our beloved little blue friends. Bluebirds will not return to a house if they think it is occupied. so in the winter make sure to remove any nests leftover from the previous year.

While the appropriate shelter will encour-

See Mattee, page 5A

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