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**Q. How long have we had these sales taxes in Union County?**

A. We have had these two extra pennies as part of our sales tax for a long time. At least 20 years. So, these are not new taxes. It is something we have all been paying for many years.

**Q. Why should we vote for an ESPLOST or SPLOST sales tax?**

A. For two reasons. The

first is to save money on property taxes and the second is to allow Union County to continue to have some of the best facilities and education programs of most any rural county in Georgia. Sales tax is also paid by everyone who passes through the county as well. So even people who pass through and have lunch and buy a tank of gas contribute to our SPLOST and ESPLOST.

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It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in our own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after

a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents - Truth and Trust; by his wife - Discretion; by his daughter - Responsibility; and by his son - Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers: I Know My Rights; I Want It Now; Someone Else Is To Blame; I'm A Victim; Pay Me For Doing Nothing.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

Submitted by Paul Little

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

be quite cantankerous. After lunch they again met Dad, Mommy and little Shirley. The Baker family sat with the ladies on some benches in front of the courthouse under some shade trees. The six people enjoyed some ice cream cones while they talked and enjoyed the afternoon. Mother said, "The ladies looked grand. They had sewn their own dresses which were as pretty as store bought dresses. Each lady was wearing a beautiful, brightly colored hat with an encircling ribbon which was hand tatted."

Dad Baker finally grew weary of the day and stood up which was a signal to Mommy that it was time to go. As he stood Minnie looked up and asked for a ride back toward Ray Mountain. Dad told her that would be fine except all they had was a log truck and the ladies would have to ride in the back. The three women agreed. They walked to the truck and mother and her grandparents started to get in when Minnie asked, "Charlie, I

believe I can get into the truck, but, I would be much obliged if you'd help my two daughters. They have been feeling poorly lately and probably can't climb up into the bed of that truck." Dad never cracked a smile and asked, "Who is going to help me?" Mother said, "I can remember laughing hysterically until Mommy Baker placed her gentle hand on my shoulder".

The old truck made it's way back through Spruce Pine and on toward Cummings Creek. They dropped the Dubois ladies off at their house and once again Dad Baker had to help the women down off the back of the log truck. Again my mother giggled a bit as her grandfather sarcastically asked if anyone was around to help him with Petunia and Pearl. And she thought she was in trouble until the old truck started down the road toward Enterprise. Mom said, "Dad Baker looked at Mommy and both of them began to laugh and they laughed so hard they began to cry".

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be introduced with four Democratic and four Republican cosponsors that would allow the Forest Service to use disaster relief funding once the original money dedicated to fighting fires runs out.

Under current law, forest fires are not treated the same as other disasters such as hurricanes. That forces the Forest Service to take money from accounts dedicated to preventative maintenance, such as clearing underbrush. In 1995, the Forest Service, which is the largest agency that responds to wildfires, spent about one-sixth of its budget on wildfires. Today, it regularly spends more than half of its \$5 billion annual budget on firefighting.

"I will keep pushing Congress to pass the bipartisan bill to end fire borrowing, stop the Forest Service from becoming the 'Fire Service' and start treating wildfires like the natural disasters they are," says Wyden. But some Republicans won't fix the funding problem without adopting what they call "preventative" reforms. Bishop supports legislation introduced by Rep. Bruce Westerman, R-Ark., that addresses the funding issue, allowing extreme wildfires to qualify for money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The bill differs from Sen. Ron Wyden's, D-Ore by allowing the Forest Service to thin trees in forests that are 10,000 acres or less without having to go through certain environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. The Forest Service could then

more quickly pursue what are known as "forest management projects," in which the agency removes dead or dying timber and sell it to mills, and then can use the proceeds to care for the forests and make them more resilient to wildfires.

Westerman's bill passed the House Natural Resources Committee in June, and a previous version of it passed the full House with the support of 20 Democrats before dying in the Senate. Westerman, a licensed forester who has a master's degree in forestry from Yale University, says his bill will preserve the national forests and treat them as a "treasured resource." "The proposal we have put out addresses the root problem with forest fires, that we have seen an increase of forest fires as we have decreased the level of management of federal land," says Westerman. "There are a lot of benefits that come with healthy forests, and it's really sad we are not managing them better." "It doesn't matter what you do to reduce paperwork to get things done if you don't fix the budget," Robert Bonnie said. "If you make investments in restoration now, over the long term, the fire threat will subside because we got ahead of it. It's not that there won't be fire. There will be fire. But you will be able to control it."

For more information on wildfire funding contact Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D, Georgia Forestry Commission, US Forest Service and particularly your Congressman to voice your opinion.

## Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

First, vaping is often marketed to kids, downplaying the dangers. With lots of flavors available for vaping liquids, as well as the variety of colors and devices available that charge just like cell phones, it's clear that vaping products are often marketed to teens.

One of the slang terms for vaping, known as JUULing ("jeweling"), comes from the JUUL brand device that looks more like a flash drive as opposed to an e-cigarette. Vaping is also often sold as a "safer" alternative to cigarettes, and some teens are under the false assumption that because e-cigarettes don't contain tobacco they're safe.

Second, vaping chemicals used in the liquids can be more concentrated and dangerous. Inhaling from a vape pen or e-cigarette, especially in the case of one containing nicotine or THC, can enhance a drug user's high and can amplify a drug's side effects. Vaping is also very new and there are literally hundreds of brands, so there's not a lot of firm information about what chemicals might be in what vape liquids.

Even beyond nicotine

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and supervisor training, and create an Employee Assistance Program in the unfortunate event that an employee tests positive for drug use. For employers with specific legal questions, access to an attorney specializing in drug compliance and workers' compensation is included in participation.

We recently discovered that one of our long-time members had opted in to this program directly through The Council on Alcohol and Drugs. By choosing to change his membership and join through our Chamber, this member is saving a couple of hundred dollars annually.

For more information about the Drugs Don't Work program, please contact Dawn Saraney, Member Services Coordinator, at 706-745-5789 or at membership@blairsville-chamber.com.

Drugs Don't Work is a partnership program of The Council on Alcohol and Drugs, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Georgia State Board of Workers' Compensation, and the local Chambers of Commerce.

## Dyer...

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of their dedication and commitment to helping people in our county.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

## Fowler...

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economy. That's hard to do on your own. Max Lucado writes, "Logic says 'bloody his nose.' Jesus says, 'wash his feet.' Logic says 'she doesn't deserve it.' Jesus says, 'You're right, but you don't either.'" Denhollander's forgiveness and willingness to see her abuser in heaven are evidence of the forgiving power of Christ.

Grace means receiving forgiveness you don't deserve. You are set free from the eternal penalty of sin by believing Jesus. To be set free from today's anger, hurt, and bitterness, be a forgiver. You can because He is.

## Mattee...

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age bluebirds to come to your yard, providing ample amount of food for them to eat when insects are scarce will help to make sure they stay there and return again to nest the next year. Bluebirds, and most other songbirds for that matter, love any sort of berry bush. Blackberries, blueberries, hackberry and numerous other native shrubs provide food that will keep bluebirds happy and healthy.

Union and Towns County Extension will be hosting production meetings over the next month. We have our North Georgia Vegetable Production Meeting on February 28th at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and the Northeast Georgia Corn Production Meeting March 13th, from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center.

Pesticide credit will be available for license holders, and dinner provided at both of these events, but only to those who pre-register by calling Union County Extension at 706-439-6030 to reserve a plate.

Because these substances affect the development of the brain's reward system, continued use can lead to addiction (the likelihood of addiction increases considerably for those who start young), as well as other health

problems.

You want your child to be as healthy as possible. Find out why vaping might be attractive to your son or daughter, and work with him or her to replace it with a healthier behavior.