# Opinions

## **Fire Safety Education**

The month of October is special to the fire service because it includes Fire Prevention Week. We have talked a bit about this year's theme of "Don't Wait - Check the Date! Replace Smoke

Alarms Every 10 Years". It reminds people to check their current smoke alarms. Union County Fire Department also has several events during the month of October for Fire Prevention. Our favorite is to introduce the Fire Department and Fire safety to the kids of the Kindergarten and pre-schools.



These classes teach various fire safety themes during the month. The students then either come to the fire department or the department pays a visit at their school. The firefighters reinforce what the students have been taught about fire safety. The subjects include smoke alarms, what to do when the smoke alarm sounds, finding the family meeting place and stop-drop-and-roll.

The students get a thrill out of being taught by a firefighter. They are taught the sound of a smoke alarm so that they will recognize it in an emergency. The students are then taught how to crawl out of their home and go to the designated family meeting place. The firefighters remind students that once they are out of their home, they shouldn't go back in for anything which includes their favorite toy.

Stop-Drop-and-Roll has been a fire safety theme for years. Students are taught that if their clothes catch on fire that they should not run but to stop-drop-and-roll on the ground to put out the fire. The firefighters prepare the students and let them to practice. They are all too happy to fall to the carpet and roll around. It is fun for the kids but it also reinforces a concept that may protect them some

Students also are shown a firefighter suited in full turnout gear and self-contained breathing apparatus. This is very important for students to know what a firefighter looks like just in case he/she is coming into a building to save them. The firefighter may be scary to the student if they are not familiar with the protective equipment firefighters wear. Children may want to hide from them. Showing them and letting them touch the firefighter in full gear lets them get more comfortable and secure with the firefighter and equipment.

See Chief, page 5B

### Letters to the Editor... **Glass Recycling**

#### Dear Editor,

I am confused. I read that our county was going to begin a trial-run of accepting glass for recycling to discern the residents' support for such a program. Glass has been recycled throughout the U.S. for years, and is easily recycled.

I went to the landfill with my garbage and recycling items, and after chucking all the other recyclables, I asked where to discard my bag of glass for recycling, and was told they don't accept glass. I mentioned the newspaper article, and he said that the new station on the four-lane at S.R. 325 would take glass-but that is the only location in the county.

That is why I am confused. I wonder how a study could be evaluated if the only place to drop off glass for recycling is one station at the furthermost point in the County, where residents from Coosa, Trackrock, Gum Log, and other points north, east and south would have to make that drive to recycle their glass? I don't think that even I would if I had to drive 30-50 miles round trip to do so. I know a new program would incur costs and effort, but we make hard decisions for our community all the time.

Ours is a progressive county, and we have seen innovative ways of addressing the needs and wishes that people have. The new shooting range, the horse arena, the pickleball courts, the Agriculture Center, the Farmers Market are just a few of the ways we provide for our people. I fervently hope that many other sites throughout the County will be available for testing the inter-

#### See Gray, page 5B

## Everybody has one...

**All Things** 

New

Wayne

Fowler

## **Personal, Not Private**

You have heard politicians say they are personally opposed to a policy, "But I don't want to impose my beliefs on others." That's intended to sound noble, even humble. It can also mean, "I have convictions but they don't matter." doesn't sound like convictions at

all. Seems more like political calculation than leadership. Shouldn't personal convictions affect your public life?

Don't worry. This isn't about politics, it's really about all of us. The answer to the question is yes,

particularly for a Christian. Faith is personal, but not meant to be private.

It is personal because it is your individual faith in a God who has revealed Himself, experienced in a community that identifies with Jesus Christ. Such faith doesn't come pre-packaged with a baby nor is it available in bulk because you associate with believers. Hopefully those believers follow Jesus in such a way that you want to receive his grace, personally.

Jesus explained to Nicodemus that he must be born again in order to enter the kingdom of God. Peter wrote that Jesus "caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3). The phrase 'born again" isn't a certain type of Christian; it is normative for all who claim His name and describes something quite personal and individual.

In his book "Against the Flow," Dr. John Lennox notes the challenge of living a personal faith in public. "Strong currents of pluralism and secularism in contemporary Western society, reinforced by a paralyzing political correctness, increasingly push expression of faith in God to the margins.' Yet Jesus called us to be salt and light, metaphors of engaging culture in a public way. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father," Jesus said.

Peter heard Jesus say, "Everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father" (Mat. 10:32). But he blew it when he denied Jesus quite publicly.

#### See Fowler, page 5B



Q. Can you name some of the projects the county has been able to construct without the need for purchasing additional property?

A 1. The Leon Davenport Veterans Center - A previously

unused Chamber of Commerce Building, has been expanded to give a home to our Veterans. It has allowed a meeting place for the different Veterans organizations as well as other groups. A 2. Union County Arena – the only covered arena in the tristate area,

Q & A from Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris

has been a huge success for our youth and adults alike. Not only for horse related events, but other com munity events to include: The Kiwanis Fair, Blue Grass Weekend, Gospel Retreats and Crusades, Food Banks, Governor visited political events, Georgia High School Rodeo Association and other similar events. The Arena has also hosted horse shows of all kinds, riding events for the handicapped, Professional Rodeos and the Cattleman's Association. The best thing about the Horse Arena is that it is open for the public of the Tri-State area to use. The Union County Saddle Club and the youth Sass N Saddles Precision Drill Team also call this home and we are so proud of them.

A 3. The Community Center - This facility is the home to the Blairsville/Union County Chamber of Commerce, The Union County Development Authority, The View Grill and Butternut Creek Golf Course and Conference Center. In addition, this conference center has welcomed hundreds of events and tens of thousands of visitors to our county, including over 10,000 golfers from out of town, 5,000 visitors to the Chamber of Commerce and 11,000 other visitors to the Community Center. This is a total of 26,000 visitors, many of whom may have never visited our county if it were not for the Community Center and its events. It has hosted realtor groups, numerous weddings, political events, Chamber functions, concerts, The Tour of Trees, and much more.

A 4. The Union County Library - The addition and expansion of our library has made it the most used library in the area and one that hosts many events for adults and kids alike. The library has a full computer lab which is open to the public, story time for children in their very own room designed with kids in mind, and a

See Paris, page 5B

### **Exercise your right to vote**

I believe that voting is not only an awesome right awarded to the citizens of the United States, but is also a responsibility. We vote for people to be our voice and represent us in the office they are pursuing. That is not a task to be taken lightly. I encourage you to educate your-

Blairsville

- Union

County

Chamber

Regina

Allison

self on the issues at hand and also about the people running for office.

In the past there was a lot of voter apathy. People

didn't think that their vote mattered or that the outcome of the election may not affect them personally. That is the furthest thing from the truth; every vote counts and the government officials we elect determine the laws, regulations, taxes, etc.. that we then are required to abide by.

has such a strong sense of the importance of vot-

## **Acorn Toxicity**

Many small wildlife species depend on the numerous acorns that fall in late summer and autumn to sustain them through the winter. However, to most animals, acorns can be highly toxic

and cause a danger ous illness known as "Quercus poisoning.

The term "quercus" is derived Melissa from part of the sci-Mattee entific names for many species of oak trees. Numerous oak trees are native to our area and many of them produce huge crops of acorns that we can see starting to drop all around the county. Quercus poisoning occurs when an animal ingests too many acorns in the fall or too many oak buds in the spring. Many domestic pets such as dogs are susceptible to this, but most cases are seen in cattle and sheep. In times of drought or large grass pest infestations, such as this past summer, cattle will take to eating other plant material since there is not enough healthy grass to satisfy them. Since those juicy green acorns are falling all around or hanging onto the tips of branches right now, they are a tempting treat to a cow that does not have access to the fresh grass it wants. If a cow has ingested too many acorns, symptoms usually take a few days to appear. The animal may have nasal discharge, rapid weight loss, loss of appetite or diarrhea. Acorns also produce toxins that can cause extensive kidney damage, so it is important to be on the lookout for these symptoms before the disease advances. Once quercus poisoning extends to the kidneys. the damage is irreversible. The best way to fight this disease is to make sure it does not happen in the first place. Though fencing may be expensive, in the long run, it is better to keep animals separated from mature oak trees that produce many acorns. It will be worth it to avoid costly vet bills. Some dairy producers have found that a ration containing ten per cent calcium hydroxide can prevent toxicity, but with beef cattle this is not feasible because there is no guarantee they are eating what they need to of the ration. Calves and yearlings are the most susceptible cattle to quercus toxicity because the smaller the body size, the fewer acorns need to be ingested to induce illness. The larger the animal, the more acorns need to be ingested to induce symptoms. The green acorns we currently see falling are often the most toxic, because the chemicals within them tend to break down and be less concentrated as the nuts mature. In order to make sure that your cattle are not tempted by these tasty yet toxic treats, try to block off sections of pasture with a lot of acorns for the next few months until they've had time to decay. Also, try to remove what acorns you can by shoveling or raking at least weekly. Finally, always make sure your cattle have adequate hay See *Mattee*, page 5B





"He likes setting the clocks back in the Fall. It makes him feel younger."

### The Addict Next Door

Sarah Wilson, wife and mother of four, became addicted to opioid pain medications after she suffered severe injuries from getting hit by an intoxicated driver about eight years ago. She was almost three years into her recovery from addiction to hydrocodone before anyone outside of her immediate family knew.

Wilson said that people are always sur-*County Anti-Drug Coali*prised to learn that she tion is to support an overall was an addict. She said safe community by providmany have a certain iming information, education fer from addiction are and support services to junkies, or in her words "people like that." "But Um 'neople like that." I'm 'people like that," of illegal substance abuse. she said.

## The Logger and Uncle Bud

During the summer of 1957 Papa wanted to clear some land so he could increase his row crop acreage on his farm. He talked with a logger from Hackleburgh about cutting some

timber and the two men agreed the log-Around ger would pay Papa based upon the timber taken from his property each week. Juring

The Farm Mickey



## **Kitty Litter**

#### Dear Editor,

My two indoor cats refused to use their litter box, which I had just filled with new light weight litter. Goggled online to find out why. Dust from light weight litter can be inhaled by cat and cause respiratory problems, and even death. I dumped the new stuff, went back to the original litter and my cats are back to using the box. I called the vet they knew nothing about this. Bill Fisher

#### **Buyer Beware: Gap Insurance** Dear Editor,

Gap insurance will be paid by person financing vehicle and interest paid for term of loan. This information is to assist others with possible problems that I have experienced with auto dealer, i.e. called Gap Insurance. At one point they call it insurance and other times they say it's not insurance. By definition it would appear to be! Those people, in my opinion, are not licensed to sell insurance! Trick is this, they call it "gap" because when you trade vehicles your old one, left with them, was insured, at this point you have no insurance on the new one. In essence, if you drive off in the new one you have no insurance, if it hasn't been transferred! You shouldn't drive it for legality reasons until the transfer has been made! If you total that new vehicle you are out X amount of money, more than you can afford to lose and other problems associated, it could be your life!

#### **Ronald G. Swinson**

## **My God Reigns**

#### Dear Editor,

From this time forth I will not worry, or fret or be afraid of the outcome of this upcoming election however it turns out. Why you ask! Because it is not going to affect my relationship to my heavenly Father. It's not going to make me waver from my faith in my Lord and Savior, Christ. The election is not going to take the Spirit of God from within me, so I choose to be happy and full of joy in the coming days ahead.

I am still going to have Thanksgiving day with some family, going to still thank God Almighty for all the blessings He has bestowed

See Combs, page 5B

And she's not alone. Some 2.1 million people abused prescription opioid pain relievers in 2012 alone, according to a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration report.

Many organizations are working to combat opioid use disorder, a medical condition defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Others aren't sure what to do, and some feel as though it's not their battle to fight, claiming that using drugs is a choice made by the user.

Tom Hill, senior adviser on addiction and recovery at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, said addiction affects everyone in some way. Hill said that there needs to be a change in attitudes regarding addiction, and openly discussing the subject will help. He noted that diseases like cancer and HIV/AIDS were once taboo subjects as well. The stigma of addiction may prevent people from openly talking about it, which creates a "culture of secrecy," as Hill put it. Hill, who is 24 years substance-free, also has experienced judgment similar to Wilson, hearing phrases like "you don't look like that" or "you're not one of them." He said that people make wrong assumptions about people who suffer from addiction.

Wilson started recovery when she became a patient in clinical trials that tested several types of delivery methods of buprenorphine, a medication that's used to treat opioid addiction.

In January, Wilson spoke in Washington at the open public hearing to support FDA approval of Probuphine, a form of treatment for people with opioid use disorder. It works as an implant in the arm that provides a constant, low-level dose of buprenorphine for six months.

Wilson has openly shared her story with others when no one else would. She said that because of the stigma behind addiction, people are unwilling to talk about it. "I began to realize if I'm not speaking out, and no one else is speaking out, who's going to fix it?" she said. Groups like FORCE, which stands for

Female Opioid-addiction Research and Clinical Experts, have banded together with the mission to reduce the negative stigma and treatment barriers surrounding opioid addiction. People often think of

See Drugs, page 5B

August the Cummings logger began cutting



One evening around the supper table the family was discussing the problem. Paul and Bud were encouraging Papa to confront the logger about the problem. Papa told his boys, "Mr. Finch and I shook hands and he promised to pay me. Not everyone out there is a bad person and sometimes we just have to trust people to do the right thing. He may have some personal problems he is dealing with, but, I believe he will pay me the money he owes." Papa was big on discussing one's problems and coming to a solution. And sometimes he could be just a mite too trusting. However, Granny was more of a doer and she would take matters into her own hands if she needed. So, after Papa left the table and went to the barn Granny told her sons that she would deal with Mr. Finch the next day which happened to be Thursday. Uncle Bud got home a little early from school that day since football practice was shortened. The first thing he did was to head to the kitchen for one of Granny's fried apple pies. While eating his snack he heard a logging truck coming from the woods and noticed Granny had left the house. Bud heard the truck stop in front of the house and soon heard the logger's inebriated voice.

Granny had stopped the truck and proceeded to explain to Mr. Finch about their disappointment and not receiving any pay for the timber he'd been cutting for 8 weeks. Mr. Finch took exception and directed some foul language toward Granny which was a mistake. Upon hearing the language Bud walked from the house while toting a shotgun. About the same time Dad wheeled into the driveway to find a man yelling at Granny and Bud holding a shotgun.

Dad ran toward his younger brother to calm him down. Bud, was smiling and that was not good either. Bud asked Dad, "Did you hear what he called our mother?"

Bud gave the gun to Paul and said, "If anyone else gets out of that truck besides the bigger one shoot 'em." Bud, walked to the truck and drug the big man through the window. For a few minutes Dad thought the big man would get the best of his younger brother. But, the big

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