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money and build the jail on property that the county already owned, as this was left over property from the Jones Industrial Park. Also, as I explained last week, an unrealistically low budget was set for construction.

Q. Does the Sheriff do a good job of keeping the number of prisoners in the jail to a minimum?

A. Yes, he does. He is constantly working with the District Attorney and the Judges to see if there is any way some of the longer serving inmates can be processed out of our jail as soon as possible, which saves all of us money.

Part III continued next week.

Allison... continued from Page 4A

agreement that allows us to protect and restore this magical place has created an opportunity of a lifetime, not only for me personally, but for the area. Being engaged in this exciting adventure is truly amazing. As president, I handle the administrative process, marketing, contracts, oversee the garden for work day assignments and just about anything else that come along!"

Her favorite quote is, "yesterday's a memory, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift, that is why it is called the present." Grace's favorite time of day is early in the morning.

Something surprising about Grace is that she is an environmental activist. She initiated the shoreline cleanup of Lake Chatuge eight years ago and was successful in securing the commitment of the Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition to continue this cleanup on an annual basis. She also initiated the countywide clean up in Towns County, now in its

fourth year, and called Towns County Clean Sweep Week. It is now included in the Ten Year Comprehensive Plan for the County. Grace just recently stepped down from chairing this position. Grace, thank you for your leadership with Towns County Clean Sweep Week and in your work at Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge.

Hamilton Gardens is a rare and special treasure that sits quietly tucked away in the North Georgia Mountains. It is a botanical paradise fairly bursting with dogwoods, tulip magnolias, native azaleas, wild flowers, trillium, and of course, rhododendron. There are over 400 varieties of rhododendron – 1,100 plants in all.

To find out more about Hamilton Gardens, you can visit their website at <http://hamiltongardens.org>. For additional information about all our Chamber Members give us a call at (706) 745-5789 or go to our website at VisitBlairsvilleGa.com.

Drugs ... continued from Page 4A

inable condition. Eighty percent of opioid addictions begin with a prescription for pain medication at your doctor's office. It must be safe if a doctor prescribes it, right? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 47,055 people died in 2014 of an accidental drug overdose – 29,467 of those from opioid-related drugs, which includes prescription pain medication. To put that into perspective, firearms were used to kill 13,286 people in the United States over the same period (excluding suicide) with a total of 3,340 killed in terrorist attacks on American soil since 1995 (3,003 in the September 2001 attacks alone).

Drug overdose is now the leading cause of accidental death in the United States. Four out of five people who become addicted to heroin start out with a legal prescription from a physician – a result of injury, post-operative care or a medical procedure. Substance-abuse disorders affect 20.8 million people in the United States – as many as those with diabetes and 1½ times as many as those with cancer. Yet, only one in 10 people receives treatment.

It's an epidemic that has crossed all socioeconomic boundaries. Drug addiction has always been viewed as something shameful, something to be hidden away from friends, employees and parents, as if it were moral failing. What if addiction was seen as just another chronic disease, alongside asthma or diabetes? Would this change your opinion of the almost 36 million people worldwide who are addicted to prescription opioid drugs? These are ordinary people who started on painkillers, prescribed by a doctor to relieve a medical problem, without realizing the risk of it turning into something deadly – addiction. We don't talk about a diabetic being clean, or a diabetic be-

ing sober. Like other chronic illnesses, addiction is a disease that needs to be managed.

Most cultures have branded addiction as an issue of willpower. The first time an illicit drug is tried we may consider it a moral failing, curiosity or the stupidity of youth. But once the brain chemistry has been changed, the need to continue the drug use is driven by the brain chemistry itself.

Society views those that take drugs as weak and unproductive, but ignoring this problem and banishing millions of people to the fringes of society is not working. Our modern healthcare networks, with clinics, hospitals, and insurance schemes, were established decades ago to service the sick and dying, yet addiction treatment was somehow sidelined – with blame, guilt and shame replacing proper care. When did you ever write off a relative for being in the hospital for high blood pressure or a heart condition? They may have also done something to contribute to their condition but there is no stigma attached to their disease.

At some point in the 1980s and 1990s, the medical profession came together to discuss how best to treat pain. There was post-operative pain, pain from dental procedures, and pain from accidental injuries. The world's economies had just fired up and downtime was frowned upon. Doctors became time constrained with their patients and pharmaceutical companies had just discovered new markets for new drugs. The solution? Prescribe opioids freely and widely for all pain. Opioids began to snowball and the problem got bigger without regard for consequences.

It ended up being the perfect storm of circumstance, commercial opportunity and timing which has delivered a worldwide opioid epidemic, with America at ground zero.

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school and summer sessions. Other targets include public broadcasting, violence against women grants, legal aid, health research, meals on wheels, programs to improve energy efficiency, civil rights enforcement, the list goes on and on.

These are programs that are designed to invest in our people which in turn benefit the country as a whole and keep our economy strong. Giving tax breaks to the wealthy merely

increases their bank accounts. It is based on the assumption that these tax breaks will stimulate economic growth. History shows otherwise. Investing in those whose needs will be met is a much more effective and reasonable way to "Make this County Great Again." Please contact your Senators and Congressman to urge them to adopt a budget that works for all of us.

Michelle Maloney

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

a big man again. You have pert near kilt me". The two men visited Slick Johnson who received not one but, two whippings that day. To make matters worse for Johnson, Cummings and West went into business together as well. There was a place on Little Bear Creek where the two men found a good spring. Next to this spring there was a round hole, tunnel like in nature, carved into a rock. This hole was primarily used by Native Americans as a granary. The hole was about 8-10 feet long and a grown man could crawl through the hole from the spring side out the backside of the rock which emptied into a big crack between the boulder and the face of a 50 feet high bluff. A nimble man could climb the face of the bluff to the top and watch, unseen, the happenings below.

The men built a large still 40 feet in front of this rock face and covered the hole in the rock with brush. John had a dog that was trained to grunt instead of barking loud at the approach of a stranger. Three times in the early 1900s U.S. Revenue Agents visited the still of John and Champ. Each time the still was busted. But, 3 times the business partners got away scot free. The dog would woof softly and the partners would climb into the hole covering the entrance with their brush pile. The men would

Mitchell ...

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the local "gaols" were full of accused villagers. No one was left to work the fields and famine became a real threat.

The hysteria ended when the Governor put an end to the inquisitions because his wife had also been accused.

Simple accusation and willing confirmation were sufficient "evidence."

The private property of those accused of "consorting" with Satan was confiscated and put up for auction. It's curious that the villagers who were the first accused owned the most prime bottom land.

2017 parallels to 1692-93 are disturbing, frightening.

George A. Mitchell

Fowler ...

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orientation of the heart. Does it provide answers that are coherent and satisfying? The Christian worldview does.

William Henley declares in his poem "Invictus," that "I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul." That is quite a contrast with the ancient worldview, "My soul waits in silence for God only; from Him is my salvation. He is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken" (Psa. 62:1-2).

Mattee ...

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the growth of trees, if there are enough of them, they can kill entire plants. Often, a single side of a cypress will turn a dead, grayish color. The cases will be the same color, so they can sometimes be difficult to spot. If the infestation is mild and the cases are within reach, remove as many as possible in the winter. In cases of severe infestation, consult your extension office for a pesticide recommendation.

Union and Towns County Extension will be holding a Master Naturalist Class in August and September this year. This is a nine week course that meets once a week and covers wildlife management, tree and insect ID, invasive species, Georgia natural history, and many other topics! If you are interested in signing up, please contact your extension office. Specific dates and registration fees TBD. Please call your local extension office if you are interested!

Dyer ...

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There are many dangers involving electrical power. This demonstration was a reminder of the respect that must be given to electricity and the people who work with it every day. This type of training is helpful to understand the dangers involved; the safety procedures utilized by the power company; and the procedures that the fire department can follow during incidents involving electricity. We consider Blue Ridge Mountain EMC a partner during many emergency situations. We are thankful for their cooperation on emergency scenes and that they provide classes to promote our safety.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

very interested. So, last weekend I made the trip to Alabama with my canoe and the pair of us put the canoe in the water. We traveled upstream from the Cummings Creek bridge and found where a rock face had broke loose from a bluff. We canoed into the crack between the boulder and the rock face. You can sit in the canoe and

touch either side of the rocks without much of a stretch. The granary is now under water, but, the crack in the rock is there above the surface of the lake. I closed my eyes and sat quietly. I thought I could hear the soft woof of a dog and the scrambling of my great-great grandfathers up the face of that bluff.