

Fireworks...from Page 1A

forest or farm animals unless a special use permit has been acquired.

Licensed fireworks distributors operating sales facilities must pay for occupational tax licenses, and temporary fireworks stands after Jan. 1, 2016, will be required by the county to obtain temporary licenses, only issued to licensed distributors, which must be approved by the building department, the Union County Fire Department, the Union County Sheriff's Office and the property owner.

Also in the new ordinance, proceeds from temporary stands must benefit a non-profit group, and the group's members must participate at the stand.

The new ordinance will be strictly enforced, with fines and penalties being applied in instances where the ordinance has been violated.

When requesting a special use permit, Commissioner Paris said, Union County residents can contact county government.

Commissioner Paris re-emphasized that the new ordinance is for the overall safety of county residents, for their homes and animals, as

well as to protect the forested areas of Union County.

In other business, Chantel Patterson, program director for MedMark Treatment Centers Blairsville, spoke on substance abuse and mental disorder recovery, after

which Commissioner Paris proclaimed September 2015 as National Recovery Month in Union County.

"Substance abuse and mental disorders are serious but treatable illnesses that impact Union County residents, with an estimated 5,750 people in recovery and more than 23 million people across the nation," said Commissioner

Paris. "Preventing and overcoming mental and/or substance abuse disorders is essential to achieving healthy lifestyles, both physically and emotionally."

"I invite all Union County residents to encourage relatives and friends of people with mental and/or substance use disorders to implement

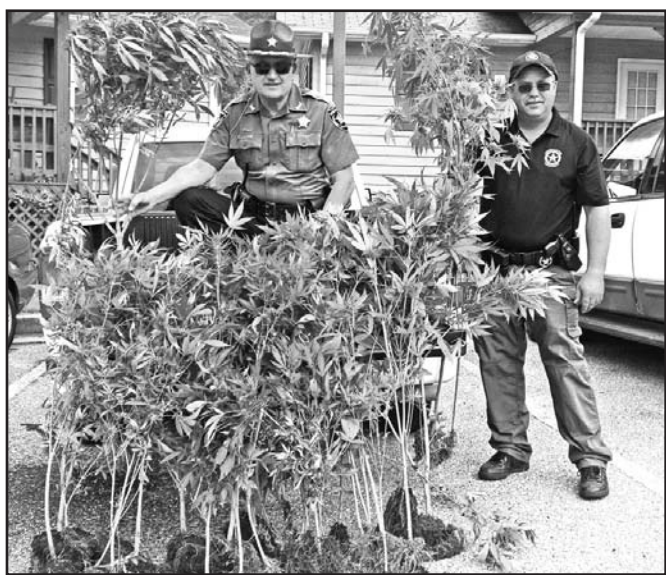
preventative measures, recognizes the signs of a problem and guide those in need to appropriate treatment and recovery support services."

Also in the meeting, Commissioner Paris announced that Keep Union County Beautiful and the North Georgia Resource

Management Authority were working together with Document Destruction Services and Atlanta Recycling Solutions to provide free documentation destruction and electronic recycling for Union County residents.

The event will take place at North Georgia Technical College on Saturday, Oct. 3, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Marijuana...from Page 1A



Union County Sheriff Mack Mason and SSgt. Shawn Dyer

The plants would have been valued at \$1,500 each if they were fully mature. The plants confiscated were about a month away from being fully mature, Sheriff Mason said.

Patterson and Barnes both were charged with manufacturing marijuana. Both were being held in the Union County Jail at press time.

Moore...from Page 1A

bacterial contamination, and we go after grants to help people fix leaking and failing septic systems, to help provide fencing and alternative water for cattle," said Moore. "We just really go into the area and try to work with the landowners and the folks in the community to correct the problems."

"This is the kind of thing that we've been doing on the Hiwassee River in Towns County since 2007. We just finished a two-year grant where we replaced nine failing septic systems that were all inside of the lake. So, the coalition has a track record for actually being able to address the problems, but we've just got to get our ducks in a row, because grants are so competitive that we have to really know what we're doing, and know where the real problem areas are before we go off asking for money."

Speaking specifically to the needs of Union County, Moore said she and coalition staff have a plan for affected waterways.

"Over the coming year, we're going to focus on the Butternut Creek watershed, and try to get a watershed plan for it, and try to get a grant in to go ahead and get started with that," said Moore. "And then, do more monitoring in Nottely with the hope of maybe in the future year expanding that

watershed plan to include the Upper Nottely River."

There is no evidence that lakes have been affected by bacterial contamination, as Moore stated explicitly that the lakes, including Nottely and Chatuge, were perfectly safe for swimming. There is, however, a need for volunteers to help with sampling efforts in order to greater address the issue of bacteria in impacted streams.

"The system that we have through Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, and the equipment that we have stationed right there in Union County that Union County helped pay for, allows for anybody that wants to come to a workshop and get trained to go out and monitor bacterial conditions in their streams," said Moore. "If people live on Ivy Log Creek, for example, that's one that we don't have anybody monitoring on. So, they could come to a workshop, get trained, get in our program, and monitor their stream at their house and know what the bacterial concentration is there."

Moore pointed out that the local governments of the two Georgia counties monitored by the HRWC have been proactive over the years, aiding the coalition's mission for clean water in the North Georgia area.

"The City of Hiwassee, the City of Young Harris, Towns County, Union County - we have good support from our local government leaders, and I think that's another very important message, because we don't have that on the North Carolina side of the line right now," said Moore.

"I just want people in North Georgia to understand that their leaders are supportive, and they're helping fund these monitoring programs, and they're open to whatever level of support that they can provide within reason for these projects," Moore added.

Anyone interested in learning how to take samples should contact Moore at the HRWC, as every volunteer helps the cause.

"It's super important and getting more critical every year," said Moore. "As you can see from other parts of Georgia, there's already a lot of controversy over having enough and having enough clean water, and we're fortunate here that right now we do have enough, and we do have enough clean water. The coalition's mission is to help keep it that way."

"The real message is that it's just great that we now have the capacity to be able to identify these problems and hopefully get some solutions on the ground before we have major widespread water quality problems," Moore added.

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