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to allow someone to ruin your peace and quiet over a long period of time without a fight, but at the same time we all have to accept a reasonable amount of sound.

Q. What does the county consider to be unreasonable loud noises?

A. The number one problem we hear related to sound is a neighbor's barking dog. If a dog is barking all the time it is usually a sign that the pet is not happy about something. It can be a sound, movement, lonesome or sometimes the dog just wants to holler (bark). As a

homeowner, it is your responsibility to see to it that your dog does not bark all the time if it is obviously negatively impacting your neighbors.

The Animal Control officer from the Sheriff's Office is very well trained and is always able to offer advice and assistance.

Whether it be a barking collar, a fence, a dog house, food or just occasional attention, the pet owner has a responsibility to control their animals within reason.

Noise Part II next week.

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first surfaced in 2000. At the request of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Pentagon released some limited data about the nature of the tests, including the locations and the agents used. Since then, the VA has sponsored studies by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in 2007 and 2016 to look at the effects of the secret tests.

While they found no significant difference in the health of veterans involved in the tests and those who were not, the authors acknowledged the difficulty of studying this issue.

"Our task was challenging because of the passage of time since the tests, and because many of the documents related to the tests remain classified," last year's report said. "Our requests for declassification of additional documents were not approved."

Lawmakers from both parties are pushing the House to endorse their demand this week when it considers a defense policy bill.

Reps. Mike Thompson, D-California, Don Young, R-Alaska, and Walter Jones, R-North Carolina, are trying to require the Secretary of Defense to declassify and disclose documents about the tests or tell Congress why he can't.

"It's been over 50 years since these tests were conducted and the DOD has yet to provide a complete accounting of what truly happened to our service members," Thompson said. "Veterans can't wait any longer."

Veterans say they need answers to get the proper medical care.

In the Senate, Jerry Moran, R-Kansas, plans to push the veterans' agenda.

"We have a duty to make certain our service members' health is protected both in and out of service, and providing access to classified military records that may prove exposure to toxic substances is critical to veterans applying for VA benefits and service-connection," Moran said in a statement.

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ing and bird watching.

Pastor Watkins shared some childhood memories with me; specifically, some things he and his brothers would do that would get them in trouble.

"My two younger brothers and I were always into something and it is a miracle we did not injure ourselves more. We used to have "pine tree rodeos" where one of us would climb a skinny tall pine tree and then the other two would chop it down and the one in the tree would cling to the uphill side of the tree and ride it down. We made sure to cut it only enough to get it falling slowly so the decent would not be sudden or too fast. The limbs helped make the landing softer."

For Roy and Nancy Watkins, their dream travel destination is one of the most picturesque states in our nation, Alaska. They want to do a combined Alaska Glacial Cruise and wildlife tour across the Denali Wilderness in Alaska.

I have had the privilege to meet "Rev. Roy," as he is known by his congregation, and have heard him preach on several occasions. In case you are wondering, yes, he is just as funny in person as he is in this article. My family and I have visited Coosa United Methodist Church several times through the years as our Aunt and Uncle Roy and Jo Mons are members. I would like to say a special thank you to everyone at Coosa for always making us feel so welcome.

The church is very active in the community. They have been long time supporters of Boy Scout Troop 101, and they provide scholarships to local students each year, just to name a few examples.

The members of the church also honor and serve the men and women in uniform through collecting donations of hygiene items to box up and send to our troops serving overseas. I have had the privilege

to attend services and listen to the heartfelt letters that some of the troops have written back to the church thanking them for this simple act of kindness. Just knowing that someone is thinking of them and helping to provide some simple necessities while they are away from home, has touched the lives of countless brave men and women serving overseas.

Jim and Linda Gorman, who are members of the church, have been instrumental in serving our troops through the Quilts of Valor program.

The church has a flurry of activities throughout the year. This Saturday, July 29th, is the annual church yard sale, which is held in the Fellowship Hall. Tools, furniture, household items, books, clothes, toys and much more for you to look through to find the "treasures." A hotdog lunch will be available for \$2 to the first 100 people. Proceeds from the yard sale benefit local missions. The yard sale starts at 8 a.m., and will run until 1 p.m.

The first Saturday in October marks their annual Arts and Crafts Sale. Church members volunteer hundreds of hours hand-making crafts to sell for this big event and serving up delicious plates of barbecue.

Coosa is another example of many in our community, at the heart of the members of the church is a strong sense of service and community.

To the members of Coosa United Methodist Church, thank you for your continued support of the Chamber and Blairsville-Union County!

If you would like specific information about the church and their programs, you can reach them at (706) 745-8893.

The church is located at 767 Mulky Gap Road, in Blairsville.

For a complete listing of all our Chamber Members, go to our website at VisitBlairsvilleGa.com

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saying yes—because saying no requires an explanation, and saying yes does not.

While it is important to teach kids about why they should say no to drug and alcohol use, it is equally important to tell them how to say no. When a young person is put on the spot he or she doesn't have hours to explain that decision to peers; there is usually only a second or two. Without a plan in place, most kids will default to "yes" rather than suffer the awkwardness of the situation. Many tweens and teens have said yes to drug and alcohol use not because they were being rebellious, but because they simply did not know how to say no.

It is important for parents to help their kids come up with ways to say no to drug or alcohol use and to practice saying no through role-playing scenarios. Parents should work with their kids in coming up with phrases that the child would feel comfortable using to say NO to the offer of alcohol or drugs. The following are some tips to help get the con-

versation started.

1. Offer to be the designated driver. Getting your friends home safely will make everyone glad you didn't drink or take drugs.

2. If you're on a sports team, you can say you are staying healthy to maximize your athletic performance—besides, no one would argue that a hangover would keep you from playing your best.

3. You could say: "I have to study for a big test, or visit my grandmother, or babysit. I can't do that after a night of drinking or drugs."

4. Keep a bottled drink like a soda or iced tea with you to drink at parties. People will be less likely to pressure you to drink alcohol if you're already drinking something. If they still offer you something, just say "I'm covered."

5. When all else fails... blame your parents. Explain that your parents are very strict, or that they will check up on you when you get home.

Source: The Council on Alcohol and Drugs

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the ingredients was Yellow Jacket larvae. The soup was actually consumed by the Cherokee as well as early colonials here in Georgia.

Poison Ivy is another nasty plant of which we all avoid at all costs. I was playing "Fox and Hounds" as a 15 year old boy with a group of friends. Like everyone else I had been taught to avoid plants that have leaves of three. However, it was late October and all the leaves were gone. I had no idea the vines in which I was hiding were Poison Ivy. In three days I had a rash that caused me to run a fever. My father knew someone who claimed to be immune to the stuff. They had gone "Coon Hunting" and the dogs had treed a big "Boar Coon" up a Yellow Poplar. However, they could not spot the coon due to all the leaves on the tree. Usually, in a situation like this my Dad would climb the tree and force the coon to jump out. But, this time the tree was covered in Poison Ivy and Dad knew he was allergic to the stuff. So, another man volunteered to climb the tree. He pulled off his shirt and shoes and rubbed the leaves all over his face.

He then climbed the tree and forced the "Coon" out of the tree. Three days went by before the man was taken to the hospital with a severe case of rash. But, the plant does have a good purpose.

You can see this example in February and March. Just walk through any woods and you will notice the tips of poison ivy vines have been nibbled upon. White-tailed Deer will actually eat the vines at this time of year because there is nothing else for them to eat.

But, there is one organism for which I can observe no positive purpose. I really enjoy walking in the woods. It matters not the time of day or the time of year. I can always feel at ease when I am in the woods.

But, beginning in mid June and lasting until late July I can go outside and immediately I get bombarded by Deer Flies. They landed on the back or top of my head to test my reflexes at slapping them. Then they begin biting the backs of my arms. To ward them off, I walk through the woods swatting them with short branches

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on earth to go tell others about the good news of Jesus Christ, for we all have a testimony to share with the world around us for the name sake of our beloved Lord and Savior, Christ, Jesus. Amen

Frank F. Combs

Fowler...

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the subject, as do the sayings of Jesus (Matt. 24, 25). Granted these often raise more questions than answers, but that's OK. God said some things must remain a mystery. "Seal up the things which the seven seals of thunder have spoken and do not write them" (Rev. 10:4). God is Sovereign over the future, and we cannot know all details.

In the Bible, revelation and mystery coexist with God deciding what is revealed and what remains hidden. He has revealed himself as a God of love not content to leave you in the hopeless human condition. You can trust Him with this, and the things you cannot know or understand. I see no mystery in that.

Mattee...

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annual plants. This removes available shelter for the adults, which will then die in the winter cold.

Squash vine borer: This moth is found all the way from Canada to Argentina and is the most devastating pest to gourds.

Though the adults do not feed on the plants, the larvae bore into stems immediately after hatching and damage plants from the inside. In some cases, they have been known to feed on the fruit.

Signs of squash vine borer damage are sudden wilting of a vine and sawdust-like waste coming from holes in vines.

The larvae look similar to beetle grubs with white bodies and brownish heads, while the adults are a striking moth with black wings and a reddish-orange body.

The larvae overwinter in the soil, so tilling your garden in the winter will kill any borers left by exposing them to the cold temperatures.

For a publication showing pictures of these pests and detailing effective pesticides, contact your extension office.

seem to fade away by mid-to-late July, but, for 6-8 weeks they can be a holy terror.

This critter has always

perplexed my thinking. Everything I know has a good purpose, but, I cannot find one for this persistent little insect.

I have ripped from shrubs or trees. Thankfully, the critters