

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### Active Shooter Exercise

In the last couple of years, the term "Active Shooter" has been in the headlines more and more. The active shooter scenario is a terrifying and unpredictable incident that can happen anywhere and at any time. Preparing to respond to the active shooter incident is difficult due to the speed of the event, the unpredictability, and the numerous variables that can be involved. The policies, procedures and training for these incidents are continuously evolving as a result of the experience obtained in previous active shooter incidents.

**Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief**  
David Dyer



Union County Emergency Management & Homeland Security/Fire Department was one of many public safety organizations who were invited to participate in the North Georgia Technical College's Active Shooter Exercise on August 5, 2016. The exercise was conducted to train employees of the school on how to deal with an active shooter event on campus and to test the latest response procedures of public safety when responding to an active shooter situation.

The exercise involved a scenario where a person entered the school and began shooting faculty and students. Faculty called 911 and began their response procedures. Units were dispatched to the scene as if the real event was occurring. Upon arrival, officers from Union County Sheriff's Office and Blairsville Police quickly eliminated the active shooter. They then began a sweep of the entire building and provided security for fire and EMS personnel to remove the injured to a safe triage area. The exercise continued off campus by having the injured transported to Union General Hospital where they were triaged and treated. The scene was then turned over to the Sheriff's office investigation unit. The scenario involved many aspects and phases of a real active shooter event and a mass casualty scenario.

The exercise provided everyone an opportunity to practice skills and to test procedures. It was also an opportunity to learn new techniques. Everyone is looking for improvement in order to better respond to a chaotic and stressful situation. After an exercise such as this, all departments will evaluate their response and determine what procedural changes are needed. Having clear procedures and practicing them in these exercises helps to improve the outcome. It is very important that all organizations work together to save as

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### Mystic

A. W. Tozer was a pastor during the Roaring 20s, the Great Depression, WWII, Korean War and the 60s cultural upheavals. You might think what he had to say would be more relevant for those trying times. Not so.

Some know Tozer from his writings on prayer. He is perhaps best known as author of *The Pursuit of God*, which Warren Wiersbe calls "one of the best devotional books ever written by an American pastor." That's remarkable, considering Tozer had no formal academic training. His lack of earned letters did not diminish his message about prayer and devotion to God whom he pursued with vigor.

He published this book just a few years after WWII as a collection of ten essays. Though a short book, it is not a quick read due to its intensity and depth. Consider his thoughts on Ps. 57:5, "Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth." He writes, "The cause of all our human miseries is a radical moral dislocation, an upset in our relation to God and to each other. (Mankind) destroyed the proper Creator-creature relation in which, unknown to him, his true happiness lay. Essentially, salvation is the restoration of a right relation between man and his Creator."

And Tozer thought there was a radical moral dislocation in 1948! People are still miserable and rather than turning to God, ignore Him who is the very source of true love and happiness. Culture today encourages people to invent god in their own image, justify the very misery that Jesus can heal, and blame those of us who have found the healing balm for our souls.

Tozer considered himself an evangelical mystic, an unusual label. He defines that as one "who has been brought by the gospel into intimate fellowship with the Godhead. He differs from the ordinary orthodox Christian only because he experiences his faith down in the depths of his sentient being. He exists in a world of spiritual reality. He is quietly, deeply aware of the presence of God." A mystic doesn't just have faith in his life, his life is shaped by his faith; he doesn't just know about God, he has an intimate fellowship with God.

If I understand the man, Tozer would not have you read his

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



### Commissioner's Questions Transfer Station, Part I

**Q. When will the mess at the Transfer Station be cleaned up?**

A. It should be fairly soon. We are in the middle of a total redo and as soon as it is completed, there will be a major change in the appearance and operation. The first phase should be completed within a couple of weeks. The second phase we will be working on over the winter.

**Q. What kind of changes are being made at the Transfer Station?**

A. You will be able to see soon. Basically, the worst part of the operation is that we are having so many non-commercial people weighing their bagged garbage instead of paying for it by the bag. This is backing up the whole process and slowing it down for everyone. In addition, this puts our regular household customers mixed in among the commercial haulers in the one small building that was not designed for the general public. Not only is it messy, but it slows down the entire process, it is unsanitary and it is potentially dangerous.

**Q. What is the county doing to clean up the operation?**

A. Beginning in a couple of weeks, the new road entrance you may have seen if you have been to the Transfer Station recently, will be used for all non-commercial bagged garbage only, and the old transfer building will be for commercial haulers only or those with large trailer loads of mixed products such as construction debris.

**Q. Why is this change being made to the garbage transfer station?**

A. It is a mess and has been for a long time. But it is for two main reasons. The first is for safety and cleanliness. The second is to make the revenue process more fair.

**Q. Why is the process not fair at the transfer station?**

A. Well it has been a problem that just developed over time without anyone really realizing how bad it had gotten. Our garbage prices have become so cheap, cheaper than all around us, and so we are starting to have people from the edge of Fannin, Towns and even NC bring their garbage to Union County. A few weeks ago we had staff checking how the process was broken. A good

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



### Date Rape Drugs: XTC, Rohypnol, Ketamine

Most students forget that alcohol is the number one date rape drug on college campuses. Although it is important to protect yourself against other date rape drugs, alcohol is by far the most widely used.

MDMA, with street alias Ecstasy or XTC, is a designer drug usually found at rave parties. MDMA is an amphetamine derivative and it is considered to be a strong stimulant. Its chemical structure is similar to two other synthetic drugs, methamphetamine and MDA. MDMA can produce stimulant effects such as an enhanced sense of pleasure and self-confidence and increased energy. Its psychedelic effects include feelings of peacefulness, acceptance, and empathy. Users claim they experience feelings of closeness with others and a desire to touch them.

According to the Government and Drug Agencies, MDMA has become a nationwide problem as well as a serious health threat. It is known to be lethal. Combining MDMA with alcohol or depressants can increase the possibility of negative effects including sedation, dehydration, exhaustion, overheating, and heart failure.

The Rohypnol pill ("roofies") looks like aspirin. Like alcohol, the drug is considered a date trape drug of choice; attackers slip the drug into victims' drinks to promote disinhibition. The drug is given to unwary victims (male or female) without their consent. The victim is physically incapacitated and has impaired judgment. This makes victims more vulnerable to assault and rape. Because of the memory loss and confusion under the influence of this drug, rape cases are difficult to prosecute. Rohypnol is an odorless, colorless, tasteless drug. If you or someone you trust did not open the container, do not eat or drink its contents. Never leave an open drink unattended and avoid punch bowls which may be spiked. If you

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### Letter to the Editor...

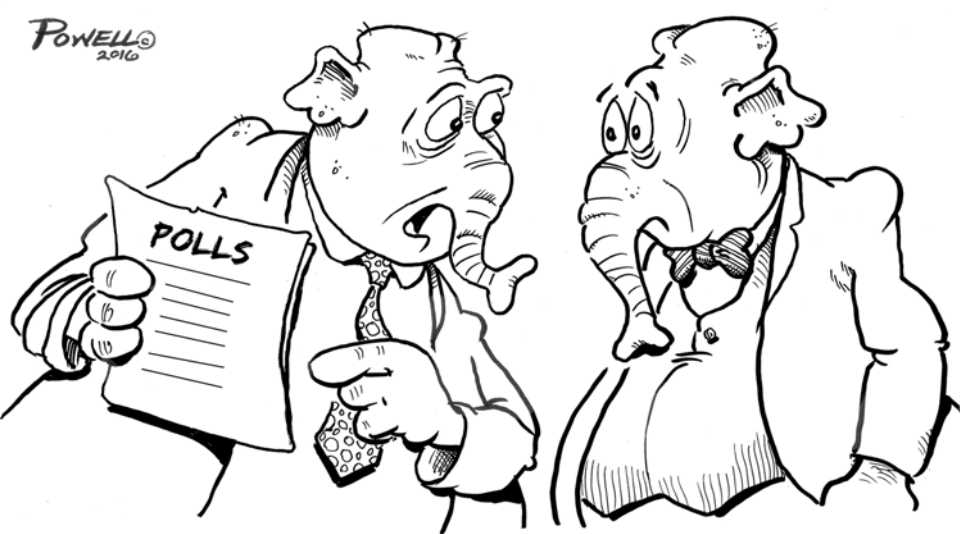
"Hillary's America"

Dear Editor,  
I admit to being mostly uninformed and uninterested in politics, a situation I now regret and am ashamed of. I grew up knowing this Country was a special place, and thought it would always be so. And while I knew about the ugliness of the Trail of Tears, the Klu Klux Klan, and Margaret Sanger's influence in eugenics and her impact in starting the abortion movement and her goal to eliminate black babies, I didn't know how those events began, or under whose influence they were made successful.

However, a short, concise movie brought history to light for me in a way I had never understood it before. For the first 20+ years of my adult voting life, I was a democrat, and for a while I was an independent, and I probably swallowed a lot of rhetoric about blame throughout the years. Never-the-less, Dinesh D'Souza's detailed documentary movie that covers the years from the founding of this country through current times has uncovered more information than I ever assimilated before.

Mr. D'Souza was imprisoned in a Federal prison after his prior documentary "Obama's 2016," in which he warned that this country would look like if President Obama was elected to a second term. Thereafter, the IRS filed a suit against him for donating an amount of funds to a friend's campaign that is considered excessive, and a judge ordered to serve 8 months in Federal prison. It was there he learned about corruption and game plans from the inmates. And it was there he heard that the government is the biggest scammer of all. His second documentary was released recently, and the 2+ hours I sat in rapt attention opened my eyes to understanding situations that I admit I had not understood before. The movie is "Hillary's America," although it begins a pattern of behavior and decisions that

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"The voter group I worry about going blue isn't Georgia. It's the GOP!"

### Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge

Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council's mission is to assist local people in planning and carrying out activities that conserve natural resources, support economic development, enhance the environment, and improve the standard of living for all citizens.

There are many worthwhile RC&D projects that Chest/ Chatt has been involved with in the past 52 years that fulfill this mission, but there is one in particular that still stands out today. It was completed in 1983 and is enjoyed by many people every year here in the north Georgia Mountains. Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge is located above the Georgia Mountain Fair in Hiawassee. Chest/Chatt RC&D was instrumental in funding and developing the project and the brass plaque on the pedestal at the gardens gives credit to Chestatee/Chattahoochee Resource & Development and Blue Ridge Soil & Water for its help, both of whom are still helping people today.

The following is a description of the gardens and how they came to be. "Quietly tucked away in the North Georgia Mountains, sits a rare and special treasure, a botanical paradise fairly bursting with dogwood, tulip magnolias, native azaleas, wild flowers, trillium, and rhododendron with over 400 varieties of Rhododendron - 3,000 plants in all. Hamilton Gardens is a truly enchanted spot, boasting one of the largest collection of rhododendrons in the state of Georgia. You can stroll tranquil pine bark trails as they wind through lush foliage and drink in the stunning views of Lake Chatuge and breathtaking countryside, including the majestic rise of Brass-town Bald, Georgia's highest peak.

In the early 1950s Fred Hamilton, an executive of the Sears Roebuck Company, bought a home in the Atlanta area and was delighted to discover native plants, including rhododendrons and azaleas, on the site. He and his wife Hazel later purchased a place in Towns County near the "Hog Creek" community. There, they found more rhododendrons and other wild native plants. This sparked their interest in creating a lush garden where they brought many other varieties of rhododendron from all over the world. The Hamilton's were happy to share the beauty of their gardens with others and invited visitors to tour the grounds. As time went by and the gardens grew, caretakers were needed to help maintain them, and Mr. Hamilton began to realize that he could no longer care for the gardens as he once did. He searched for a place to donate his extensive collection of rhododendrons, where the conditions were right and the soil conducive to their growth. Tests were done and a compatible soil was discovered at the grounds of the Georgia Mountain Fair.

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Frank Riley

Executive Director of RC&D



### Bubba The Coon Dog

My friend, Patrick Fix, is a tenderhearted man that has always loved his dogs and Bubba was no exception. Patrick fell in love with the sport of coon hunting as a young boy and spent many a night walking the ridges and hollers of Cooper's Creek Management Area chasing that old masked bandit. What kind of trouble can a young boy get into while he is in the woods chasing coons? Not much unless you are Patrick.

Patrick was getting pretty serious about his hobby when he obtained Bubba the coon dog. It was love at first sight for this boy and his dog. They began to spend many an hour with each other and the dog could actually understand and communicate with Patrick. For example, one night when Patrick was about 10-12 years old he took to the woods after dark. This October night was clear and cool. Just breathing the crisp fall air made you thankful to be alive and appreciative of being able to live in these mountains. Patrick looked at his dog and said, "I wish we could stay out here all night long". Bubba looked at him as if he understood and then he trotted off up a cove.

It wasn't long until Patrick heard a locating bark and it was off to the races. Bubba treed one coon after another. The boy and his dog lost track of time and all of a sudden some pink appeared on the horizon. The pair knew they had stayed out too long, so they made a bee line for the Fix house. In the meantime Patrick's mother had been walking the floors wondering about her boy. Patrick's dad had long since gone to bed telling Mrs. Fix, "Don't worry he is fine". Patrick came out somewhere on the Duncan Ridge Road and was picked up by Eugene Burnett, a local Game Warden on patrol. Eugene gave Patrick a ride back home and when he came through the door of the house, Mrs. Fix lit into him asking, "Where have you been all night?" Patrick tried to explain that he and Bubba had lost track of time and that it had been the best night of hunting he had ever experienced. His Mom was not buying his story. So, Patrick gave up and asked to go to bed. But, since it was a school day he was told that he had to go to school even though he had missed the bus.

Patrick said it was all he could do to stay awake all that day. He constantly found his mind wandering back to the big Poplar and Hemlock trees full of raccoons on the management area. Patrick lived a difficult life for a time. He was grounded from the big woods until he could figure out what time he needed to be back at home. But, each day that passed made him more fond of his prized coon dog. Patrick felt sorry for Bubba because they could not hunt for a while. So, he needed to determine a way in which they could spend some quality time together.

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



### Mosquito Control

If you've had a cookout, attended any outdoor events, or worked in your gardens lately, surely you have heard the familiar high pitched buzzing of mosquitoes. Though they are small in size and weak flyers, they have an excellent sense of smell that helps them to find any nearby animals so they can get their much desired blood meal. You can find many products that claim to repel mosquitoes, but the best way to get rid of mosquitoes is to make sure that your property is free of sites where they like to gather.

Many female mosquitoes need to drink blood in order to make eggs, making them excellent transmitters of disease. Hours after a female fills her stomach with blood, she begins producing eggs. In about three days, she will lay those eggs in stagnant water. This water could be anything that does not have a current such as the edge of a lake, rainwater in old tires and cans, and sometimes even water that has collected in leaves of plants, among other places. Once the eggs are laid, they hatch within one day. The larvae that hatch out of the eggs attach their breathing tube, or "siphon," to the surface of the water. Because the siphon is on the tail end of the larvae, the young mosquitoes hang upside down. This allows them to stay completely submerged in the water while still being able to breathe. As larvae, mosquitoes feed on particles in the water that they sift through their simple mouths. After about seven to ten days, depending on the weather, the mosquitoes enter a "pupal" stage that looks like a tadpole. They do not eat during this stage, but two days later they move to the surface of the water and turn into adults which then fly off to mate and find food.

Male mosquitoes never drink blood, but instead feed on nectar. In fact, in some species of mosquitoes, neither the male nor the female ingests blood and the females can still produce eggs. However, many of the female mosquitoes that we have around here still require blood. Because they have terrible eyesight, mosquitoes rely on their strong sense of smell that can allow them to detect the carbon dioxide that we breathe out as well as other odors that our skin releases. Once a mosquito finds a host, it takes about five minutes for her to completely fill her stomach and ingest enough blood to produce one clutch of eggs.

The best way to cut down on any mosquito problems would be to get rid of as many sources of standing water as possible. Bird baths and kiddie pools are perfect breeding grounds for these insects, so emptying them and replacing the water every few days will prevent the larvae from developing in them. If you have a water source that cannot be emptied, a very thin layer of oil at the top can prevent the larvae's siphons from attaching to the surface of the water, causing them

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From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



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