

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Are You Prepared

Over the last week we have been reminded how events that happen far away can affect our daily lives. The news of the gas pipeline repair and the possible shortage of gasoline resulted in a rush to the gas pumps and a gas shortage. This was not a disaster; not a terrorist event; nor a weather related emergency. If the gas shortage would have continued for a longer period of time, we may have been stuck at home for a while. This is just another reminder of how unpredictable this world can be and how we should always be prepared.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Continuing with the theme of the National Preparedness Month, we would like to go into more detail on how to prepare an emergency kit for emergencies and disasters.

We now live in a world that runs off a delivery system that is "just in time" which means that supplies are delivered to the stores just in time for purchase. There is no real reserve. Any delay in that delivery system can mean a shortage of just about anything. It is better to be prepared for these events and have essential supplies for when there is a delivery shortage. These essential supplies can be stored in an emergency kit.

An emergency kit includes food, water, flashlight, batteries, weather radio, first aid kit and many other things essential for survival. Other items that you may want to consider are medications, pet food, cash money, and games for the kids. An emergency kit should be able to sustain you and your family at home for at least three days. It is recommended having supplies for up to five days.

We should also have an emergency kit for our vehicle. These kits can be very helpful in the event that you are stranded on the road for an extended amount of time due to weather, road conditions or out of gas. Emergency kits should be equipped for emergencies that may happen during any time of the year...spring, summer, winter or fall. For more information and an example of the supplies needed in an emergency kit, visit www.ready.gov/kit.

Preparing for emergencies can be a family event. Pick out a day where the entire family can be involved in the planning and purchasing of supplies for the emergency kit. Make sure that everyone knows where the kits are stored and what is in them. Being

See Chief, page 5A

History Lesson

Polls aren't just for politics. The recent Pew Religious Landscape Survey found some interesting trends about Christianity in America. A glance back in history can help us make sense of it.

The Survey found a decline in the number of Americans that identify as Christian, and an increase in the "nones" (people with no religion). The secular media concluded that Christianity in America is dying. But on closer examination we find that regular church attenders remained constant, and the number of evangelicals increased. So what's happening? As the culture becomes increasingly secular, nominal (name-only) Christians are giving up the pretense.

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



A history lesson would help here. The colonial church in America was stagnant in the early 1700s. Church membership was in decline, likely due to scandals such as the infamous witch trials. To stem the loss, churchmen developed a dubious plan to offer "halfway" membership for those assenting to church teachings, but not willing to embrace Jesus and "convert."

Into this awkward mix of nominal Christianity and skeptical culture Jonathan Edwards was born. His diary reveals that as a Yale student in 1720, a Bible passage moved him to enthusiastically convert to Christianity. There, he read about unbelief and mercy, Christ Jesus the patient Savior of sinners, and eternal life. "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory" expressed the rapture of his soul! (1 Tim. 1:17)

Later as a pastor, he preached about the Savior and began to witness remarkable and extraordinary events leading to mass conversions. The Great Awakening continued for 10 years. Its vast outdoor meetings of up to 20,000 souls foreshadowed deserted taverns, packed churches, and changed communities.

History and this Survey reveal the difference between "church-ianity" and Christianity; between religious affiliation and saving faith in Jesus Christ. Whether half-members, nominal Christians, or nones, people need a relationship with the Savior who is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Heb. 13:8). The church has no option or need to compromise truth per the demands of culture. Unpopular truth is still true.

See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

I visited and assisted at the remodeled Transfer Station which opened today (September 19, 2016). These questions and comments came from some who were bringing their bagged trash and recyclables to try out the new facility.

What an awesome place. Can't believe what you have done to make this better. It has taken a long time to clean this up but we are sure glad it is now redone. What a view.

This looks like a new part of town. There has always been a good view at the Transfer Station, but this is hard to believe.

Thanks for making this a clean and safe place to come. Mostly, I am glad that I do not have to wear my boots any longer for fear of getting garbage all over my shoes.

You and your staff make whatever you do in the county clean and neat. We appreciate this very much.

Wayne Colwell always said, "If it is worth doing, it is worth doing well," and that is exactly what you have done. I responded to the lady that that statement from Wayne Colwell was one I also had remembered from him and used that philosophy on any project we have done in the county.

How did you guys make this look so nice? We are very pleased. Some simply gave a thumbs up to us as they drove off if we did not have a chance to speak to them.

Q. Why did it take so long to come up with this idea to improve the Transfer Station?

A. It was Advanced Disposal's idea and we just took it and ran with it. We had been searching for a solution to our garbage problem for years and we are hopeful this will be a long term solution.

Q. What problems were encountered this first morning of operation of the new recycle operation?

A. Mostly problems with people not knowing or understanding the new procedures. First, there can only be bagged garbage or recyclables allowed in this area. There can be NO LOOSE GARBAGE. If you have a trash container full of loose garbage, you will have to go to the original transfer station, pay the minimum fee and dump this in the transfer building unless you place it all in bags.

Q. Can we place our recyclables in the trash bins?

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



See Paris, page 5A

ADHD Common Among College Students Who Misuse Stimulant Drugs

College students who misuse stimulant drugs are more likely to have attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or other psychiatric problems, a new study shows. The study, published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, also found that immediate-release stimulants are more likely to be misused than extended-release versions of the drugs.

The mission of the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition is to support an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.

A previous study found that nearly two-thirds of college students had been offered stimulants for non-medical use, and 31 percent had used them over a four-year period. The new Massachusetts General Hospital study included 300 undergraduates between the ages of 18 and 28 at Boston-area campuses. One-third misused stimulant drugs. Misusers were more

See Drugs, page 5A

Letters to the Editor...

Letter to Congressman

Doug Collins Concerning Veterans

Dear Congressman Collins,
I am the wife of an OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) combat veteran. We moved to North Georgia a little over a year ago and our experience transitioning to the Georgia VA system has been nothing short of a nightmare! He has been on the wait list to get into the Blairsville Clinic, due to the lack of personnel they are at patient capacity. He is currently assigned to Oakwood, which we just recently changed from his original assignment to Atlanta. 80 miles to Oakwood versus 113 miles to Atlanta is better, but is still close to a 2 hour drive one way. Spending approximately 6 hours for a doctor's appointment is unacceptable for anyone much less a medically retired soldier with lifelong combat related disabilities. My husband and I have spent the last 2 weeks trying to set up an appointment with podiatry, all we get is the run around, a call back here and there, each one passing the buck stating they will contact us back with appointment information. 2 weeks and counting! Is this a way to cover up the wait times and try to conform to the Veteran's Choice Program. How does the patient document their wait time simply trying to get an appointment? Also, we were told by a VA employee my husband does not qualify for the Choice Program in relation to the distance of

See Sutherland, page 5A

??????????

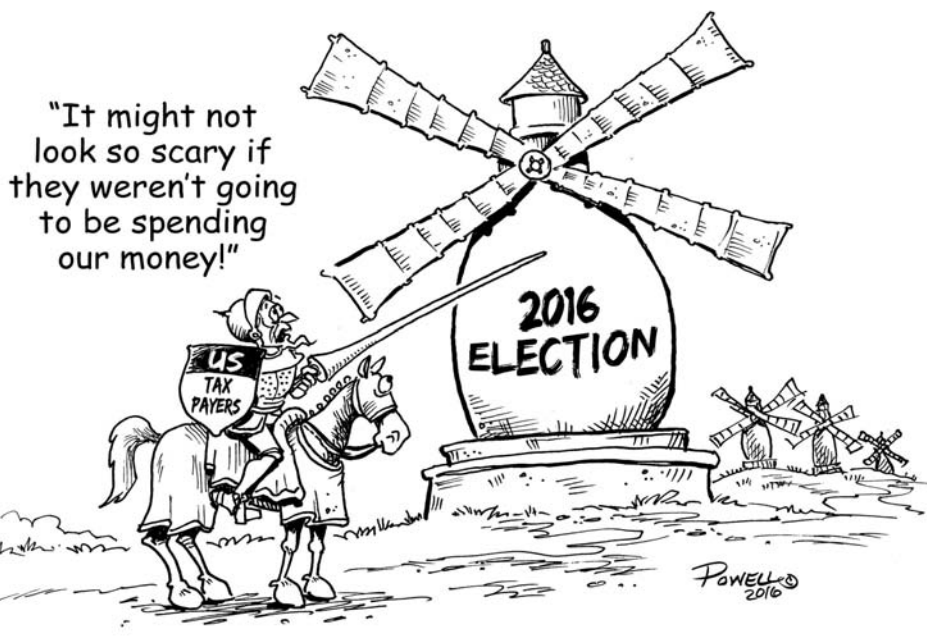
Dear Editor,

Near the end of his life, evangelist George Whitefield once said and I quote: What! get to heaven on your own strength? Why, you might as well try to climb to the moon on a rope of sand.

Sadly today and even in the past folks have been trying to figure out a way to get to heaven and all they have to do is read the truth of God's word, for the Bible tells us exactly how we can know that when we die we shall be in the very presence of our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus.

When I think of all the brilliant people that have died without Christ in their life, wow what a waste. They could have changed the world, if only they would have believed in Jesus and still folks today are not convinced that there is a God in heaven, that Jesus Christ never came to earth and died for all on the cross. And then we have folks who think that there is more than one way to get to heaven, but again God's word of truth is spoken in John 14:6 +++
Jesus said: I am the way, the truth and the life, no one come to the Father in heaven, except through Me. Folks, all it takes is Faith in a loving

See Combs, page 5A



Bats are Essential to Life

Bats are an integral part of our lives and they benefit our environment by catching a wide variety of insects, and the most important one to us is mosquitoes. Research has shown that insect catches are individually directed pursuit maneuvers where each insect is detected, located and intercepted in flight within about half a second by echolocation. Certain individual bats catch mosquitoes and fruit flies at remarkably high rates and sometimes a bat can average as many as 10 mosquitoes or 14 fruit flies per minute and researchers have observed bats capturing 2 fruit flies within half a second.

Bats are essential to our lives and you can imagine what sitting in the backyard would be like without these little creatures darting, dipping, and diving catching mosquitoes before they land on us. Bat activity in response to thinning and burning in the Appalachian Mountains is much debated topic among those who debate such things. With the sharp decline in cave-hibernating bats as the result of White-nose Syndrome (WNS), there is great interest in learning about how bats respond to forest management activities, including prescribed fire.

Recent studies focused on bats in Appalachian oak forests managed with thinning and prescribed fire where both studies monitored bat activity with bat detectors that record echolocation calls. In the Allegheny Plateau of southern Ohio researchers in 2016 monitored bat activity in three types of stands: untreated controls, shelterwood harvest and shelterwood harvest with fire. The most common species detected were eastern red bats and big brown bats, followed by the Myotis plus tri-colored bat species group that are being heavily impacted by WNS. Similar to other studies in a variety of forest types, the researchers found that total bat activity was significantly greater in the more open-structured, less "cluttered" stands that had received a shelterwood harvest - this included the eastern red bat, big brown bat, and the Myotis/tri-colored group. In shelterwood stands that were cut more heavily and burned, the activity of eastern red bats was reduced in the summer after the prescribed fire was conducted. The authors speculated that a reduction in moth abundance may have limited red bat activity. However, across all treatments, bat activity was greater in the partially harvested stands (with or without fire) than in the untreated control stands.

Bat response to prescribed fire and overstory thinning in hardwood forest on the Cumberland Plateau, Tennessee (Catoosa Wildlife Management Area), researchers studied bat activity and insect abundance after woodland restoration treatments that employed thinning and prescribed fire. Their study took place in shortleaf pine-oak stands that had been heavily impacted

See Riley, page 5A

RC&D Executive Director

Frank Riley



The Shoe is now on the Other Foot

As a parent is there anything you worry more about than your kids? This has really come home to me over the past few years. When I was a boy I loved to go barefoot even in the winter time and I never wore shoes in the house. As a result I was constantly coming down with a cold. Therefore, my dad forbade me from going barefoot during winter, even in the house. Late one night I woke up to a feeling of urgency. I jumped from the bed and looked for my shoes. The only ones I found were my brand new and heavy Sunday dress shoes. I put them on and walked down the hardwood floor to the only bathroom in the house.

My parents' bedroom was just down the hall and the sound of my walking awoke my mother and she woke up my dad and told him we had an intruder in the house. Dad couldn't find his shotgun so he grabbed his 3 iron and walked down the hall. He noticed the bathroom light on and kicked in the door and there I sat. I explained to Dad, "You told me not to go barefoot in the house and these were the only shoes I could find".

When my oldest son was born I would get up 3-4 times a night to check on him. On one such night I went to check on him as I was going to bed. I had turned off the lights and the house was very dark. I went to Will's bed and bent over his little body. I still could not see anything so, I bent over further. I guess I got too close to his face and much to my surprise I was punched directly in my left eye by Will's 2 year old fist.

My wife and I went shopping when Will was 3 years old. I explained to Will that he should stay close and that he should not talk to strangers. I remember looking away for just an instant and Will was gone. I could not see him anywhere. I was really beginning to worry and I called his name. I could faintly hear Will's voice answering me. I walked closer to the sound and realized he had locked himself in the dressing room. Later I asked him why he had gone into the dressing room and he said he just wanted to see what was on the other side of the door.

My youngest son, Wade, came along and I noticed that he was the inquisitive one. He was always asking questions. One morning I was awakened at 3 AM by someone shaking my face. I thought something was wrong and jumped from the bed trying to figure out what to do. I came to myself by looking into Wade's eyes. He grinned at me and asked, "Dad, why are green beans green"? I took a deep breath and thought to myself, "I'm a County Agent. I can answer this question". So, I carefully explained the process of photosynthesis to my 5 year old son. He carefully listened to all I had to say and when I had finished he said, "Okay" and went back to bed.

The next fall my boys and I went camping

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Leyland Cypress

Throughout the Southeast, Leyland cypress have grown in popularity as both individual ornamental plants and as screening plants. Though they are marketed as hardy trees, it is still important to be sure they have adequate resources and don't become stressed or diseased.

One of the most common diseases of Leyland cypress in our area is Seiridium canker. This is caused by the fungus *Seiridium unicomne* and results in the death of individual branches on an infected tree. Dark, oval cankers form on the flesh of branches and are often dry and sunken with a raised edge. One canker will not completely encompass a branch. However, multiple cankers can form at one point, which significantly reduces water flow to the rest of the branch. Eventually, sap will start to flow from these cankers as the branch begins to die. While individual branches are usually all that is affected, if the infection spreads to the trunk or a majority of the tree, the entire plant will die. There is no cure for this disease, so the best way to take care of it is to prevent it. Make sure cypress planted as a screen have at least twelve to fifteen feet between them to allow for adequate airflow and discourage disease establishment. Drought conditions make trees especially susceptible, but studies have shown that those trees with a regular irrigation schedule can overcome mild to moderate infections.

Passalora needle blight can also affect Leyland cypress in our area. It is also referred to as *Cercospora needle blight*, but it is caused by the *Passalora sequioae* fungus. The fungus typically only affects growth that is at least one year old. Because of this, a major symptom is needle drop starting at the bottom of the tree where the oldest tissue is. The needles will grow back but more and more of them will drop each growth cycle as the disease moves up the tree. Sometimes, only one side of the tree will be affected. This is especially common in Leyland cypresses in close proximity, such as those planted as a windscreen. If there is not enough space between them, there will not be enough air flow and conditions will be ideal for fungal growth and spread. In addition to making sure there is enough space between trees, restrict irrigation to early morning hours. Never water at night, because the moisture will not evaporate completely until the next day and any spores will develop due to the presence of water and absence of light. There are several fungicides available for treatment of needle blight. Contact your county extension office if you need fungicide recommendations.

Insects can also be major pests of Leyland cypresses, especially bagworm moths. Many people get these confused with webworms, which make silken tents on the ends of branches. Bag-

See Mattee, page 5A

From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West
Owner/Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Derek Richards
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Staff Writer

Shawn Jarrard
Staff Writer

Lily Avery
Staff Writer

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer

Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m. • Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - 1 Year \$35.00. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1987 at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

Website: www.nganews.com

E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com

Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514