

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Burning Debris Reminder

Fall is upon us and in full force; the leaves have turned, and it's a beautiful sight to see the multiple colors. Unfortunately, all those leaves will eventually fall, and it will be time to clean them up. Everyone will be raking leaves and burning debris piles. Each year, we remind everyone to burn safely and to understand the responsibilities when burning. The following is some information provided by Georgia Forestry Commission on safe burning practices and information needed for burning leaves and debris.

When burning debris, you must first obtain a burning permit from the Georgia Forestry Commission. It is illegal to burn without a permit. The burning permit is easy to obtain by calling 1-877-OK2-Burn, or by going online at www.gatrees.org. Complete some basic information and a burning permit number will be issued if burning is allowed that day. There may be times when burning is not allowed, and in those cases, permits will not be issued. Outdoor burning permits are for the burning of natural vegetative materials only. It is unlawful to burn manmade materials such as tires, shingles, plastics, lumber, household garbage, etc.

Once you have a permit, it is time to prepare for safety and burn the debris pile. Check the weather to know conditions. Make sure that you have enough time to commit to burning the debris pile. Advise your neighbors that you will be burning. Prepare tools that may be needed to help control the fire, such as shovels, rakes and a water hose. Wear the proper clothing, including long pants, long sleeves, boots, gloves and safety goggles. When preparing the debris pile, make small piles and clear 25 feet or more around the pile. You should never use any flammable liquids to start the fire. Remain with the fire until all debris is burned. If small embers remain, extinguish them with the water hose before leaving the fire. All fires must be extinguished before dark.

Land owners who burn are responsible for fire safety, what they burn, the smoke, and maintaining the fire on their property. Always remember to get a permit and practice all safety tips. Knowing your responsibilities and using sound safety practices can keep you safe and may prevent wildland fires. For more information on burning safely or on the protection and conservation of Georgia's forest resources, please visit www.gatrees.org. *Union County Fire Department - Our Family Protecting Your Family*

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Adopted

Perhaps you've heard of Russell Moore. Some know him as a commentator on politics, policy, and social issues. Southern Baptists know him as the leader of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

What you may not know is that he's the father of two adopted boys from Russia. This, along with being a theologian, gives him a unique perspective on adoption. In fact, he cannot talk about his sons' adoption without talking about the meaning of adoption for Christians. In his book, "Adopted for Life," he writes: "We believe Jesus in heavenly things - our adoption in Christ; so we follow him in earthly things - the adoption of children. Without the theological aspect, the emphasis on adoption too easily is seen as mere charity."

The theology is clear. In the fullness of time, God sent Jesus, "that we might receive the adoption as sons," and by His Spirit we can call God our Father (Gal. 4:4-6). The Spirit of God is called the "spirit of adoption," and believers are "fellow heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:15-17). Of course, being a Christian is not a prerequisite for adopting a child, but it certainly packs more meaning into the human act of adoption knowing that we are all spiritual orphans needing a Father. He is the one "from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name" (Eph. 3:15). An adopted family is just as real a family as we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Moore describes the horrifying conditions in his sons' orphanage, and the agonizing, costly process of making them his own. The toddlers were unresponsive, deprived of human touch to the extent of causing developmental delays. After visiting with them weeks before the final action, the boys would groan and wail when the Moores would leave the orphanage. Those boys knew they had experienced something that they did not want to lose. They needed simply to belong, to be fully known and loved.

We see this theme several times in the gospels. A woman of ill repute anointed Jesus' feet with perfume and tears. The other men around were fairly disgusted with it. Jesus asked them a powerful question. "Do you see this woman?" (Luke 7:44). They were blind to this abused and ignored woman. A non-Jewish

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

We have had several different questions about animals and have combined them into this week's Q & A.

Q. I am concerned about an animal that, in my opinion, is not being properly cared for. What should I do?

A. You can contact Union County Animal Control at 706-439-6052 during regular business hours. If no one answers, you can leave a message and an officer will get back to you as soon as possible. After hours, you should call the non-emergency 911 at 706-439-6038. Only call the emergency E-911 number if there is a serious threat for injury or life.

Q. If there is an animal in my neighborhood that is loose, what should I do?

A. As long as the animal is not being aggressive or a nuisance, you can try to see if the animal has a collar and make contact with the owner. Otherwise, all animals do not stay at the homes of their owners. While we wish that were the case, we are in a rural area, and when outside the city, certain dogs or cats may wander around. And like people, if they are not causing a problem other than just wandering around, that in itself is not necessarily a reason to call Animal Control.

Q. When should we be concerned about an animal without tags that is wandering around?

A. As bad as we hate to discriminate, there are certain breeds of dogs that have a reputation of potentially being very aggressive and even dangerous. If it is one of these breeds, you should call Animal Control or E-911 if you fear for your home, family or property.

Q. Is there a leash law in Union County?

A. There is not a leash law, however, any dog or cat is required to have a collar with proper identification and to be under control of the owner. So if this animal becomes a serious nuisance, then the owner is responsible for keeping their animal under their control, whether by leash or by fence.

Q. Do dogs and cats have to be spayed or neutered and up to date on their rabies vaccinations.

A. Yes. This is required by Union County ordinance. Also, the pet must be spayed or neutered and currently up to date on

Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



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Drug Free Mountain Life

Vaping Marijuana

Nearly one in 11 middle and high school students in the U.S. has used cannabis in an e-cigarette, according to a new report.

That breaks down to 12.4% of high schoolers and 4.5% of middle schoolers, 8.9% combined, who have ever vaped marijuana, which is on par with or higher than what previous studies have found. The data come from the 2016 National Youth Tobacco Survey, which includes more than 20,000 students nationwide.

The report also comes just after Dr. Scott Gottlieb, head of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, took aim at e-cigarette manufacturers, warning that they must show soon how they'll keep the devices out of the hands of young people.

"This high rate of cannabis use in e-cigarettes is a public health concern," study author Katrina Trivers, an epidemiologist at the U.S. Centers for

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The DRUG FREE MOUNTAIN LIFE campaign supports an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families, and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.

HATS OFF TO THEM
Remember Veterans Day - Nov. 11

Chamber of Commerce

Now that Halloween has passed, we move into November with many things to be thankful for. God has again painted the mountains, and the trees are popping with color. We get an opportunity to share this beautiful country with visitors to our area. While we see and hear of all the tragedies that are happening in our nation and around the world, I hope everyone will have an opportunity to share a kind word with someone and take time to say a prayer for our nation.

Back by popular demand, we will be having the Fall Fling Fashion Show and Luncheon on Nov. 8 at the Union County Community Center. The show will be from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. Come take a look at the latest styles from local retail merchants and start your wishlist early.

Also on the evening of Nov. 8, the Union County High School Entrepreneurship Program & DECA Organization will host the Painted Chair Silent Auction.

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Letters to the Editor

Veterans Day

To the Editor:

The members of American Legion Auxiliary Ira Weaver Unit 121 would like to express our sincere appreciation for the men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces.

Thank you for serving this great country. Thank you for protecting us. Thank you for the security we have here at home. We know you sacrificed much for your country and all of us. And though you may no longer wear the uniform, we know you're always on call to serve and protect the freedom and security of the United States of America.

We invite everyone to pause on Nov. 11, Veterans Day, to remember those who have fought for our freedoms. Thank you to all who have so bravely protected us.

Founded in 1919, the American Legion Auxiliary helps to advance the mission of The American Legion. With nearly three-quarters of a million members, it is the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, and one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military and their families. ALA members volunteer millions of hours annually, with a value averaging \$2 billion each year. From helping to draft the GI Bill in 1944 to advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the American Legion Family has been instrumental in advancing legislation that improves the quality of life for our nation's veterans. To learn more and get involved, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.

Nancy Harwood, Ed.D.

President, Ira Weaver American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 121

Prayer & Praise

Dear Editor,

Our Holy, Righteous, Heavenly Father that brought this world into existence and holds it in His mighty strong hands... He controls His universe. What a great God you are! I call on you this day in Jesus' Holy name, the name above all others. He made it that way!

Jesus sitting beside His Father interceding for every soul that calls to Him, day or night, how great thou art! We do not need to pray to Washington or this world. What a wonderful plan from way back then! What a price is paid.

I sometimes think of what is really going on in the world we live in, and the thought comes back to me about what was going on before we came to this point we live in today. Mankind and Satan have made a mess of this world, from that time until now.

Just thinking that only the blood of an animal was ever sufficient! The animal didn't love us. Only Jesus has that love to save a lost

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RC&D

North Georgia Prescribed Fire Council annual meeting

In September of each year since 2007, the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council has held its annual meeting in Tifton, where 300 or so foresters, landowners, consultants, and others who use prescribed fire to manage their forests gather to share experiences and learn about new techniques for managing fire in their woodlands. Fire is a natural phenomenon that has occurred in our forests since the beginning of time and maintains a natural balance in the environment.

Some of our well-intentioned ancestors decided that they knew better how to maintain the environment than mother nature, so they created programs to extinguish all fires in the forest. Smokey Bear was the main culprit and used to say, "Only YOU can prevent Forest Fires!" and our firefighters worked hard to extinguish all fires in the forest, which has led to build up of fuels that contributes to the out-of-control wildfires that we have today.

Only recently has Smokey Bear changed his motto to "Only YOU can prevent Wildfires!" and now promotes the use of intentionally set fire to get the forests back the way nature intended it to be. In some areas such as parts of California, changing the message is too late, and now, with the build-up of years of fuels, they are experiencing the largest, hottest, longest, and most expensive wildfires in history.

The Georgia Prescribed Fire Council members promote the wise use of planned and controlled fire to get our forests back in line with the way nature intended it to be. The mission of the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council is: To protect the right, to encourage the use of, and to promote public understanding of prescribed fire. Prescribed fires are used by such a variety of individuals, agencies and organizations throughout the state that the Southwest Georgia Prescribed Fire Council was established in 2002 in a regional effort to encourage the exchange of information, techniques and experience among practitioners.

In January of 2007, the steering committee, working with all partners, decided to expand and become the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council. This platform allows the council to be engaged in prescribed fire advocacy across the state. Forest lands constitute significant economic, biological and aesthetic resources of statewide importance. Frequent fires, set by lightning strikes and Native Americans, have shaped Georgia's ecosystems for thousands of years.

Our forest ecosystems evolved with fire

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RC&D Executive Director
Frank Riley



Traveling Man

If Papa were still living, he would now be 103 years old. Many times over the past few years, I have compared my life to the life Columbus Cummings. We both had two sons. We both had careers in agriculture. We both enjoyed seeing new places and experiencing new things. However, throughout Papa's early years, life was much more difficult, and traveling was particularly difficult.

During World War II, Papa was actively engaged in farming. So, the Draft Board skipped over him when his number came up for the draft. He was told the country needed his cotton more than his person. He was at home; however, things were extremely difficult for the young family during the winters.

So, after the cotton was harvested in early October, Papa hitched a ride to Phil Campbell, where he caught a train to Miami, Florida. Papa's older brother, Pickens, secured a job for him milking cows on a large dairy just north of Miami. Papa worked for just over a month when he received word that his youngest son, Bud, was sick with the pneumonia. It was difficult to even send a message in those days, and Granny had to send a relative 20 miles to Russellville where the nearest phone was located. That relative called the operator in Miami. The operator found someone to take the message out to Papa at the dairy. He had very little money because it was being sent home to Granny and his two sons. So, he had to hitchhike his way from Miami to Phil Campbell. It took more than a week. By the time he got home, Bud was much better and recovering. Papa vowed to never leave his family alone again. He said, "We always had plenty of food. We just never had any money."

Papa also worked harder than I ever thought about. He owned a 300-acre farm in North Alabama that he cleared by hand. The whole farm was in trees when he purchased the land. My grandparents cut the trees with a cross-cut saw. Then they plowed around the stumps and planted their crops. The stumps all rotted in about seven years and they had a field. Now, I think I am working when I use a weed-eater or when I ride my mower for a few hours. I know that our generation has it much better than Papa's generation.

During his early years, he raised his own food. If he didn't raise it, Papa didn't eat it. He grew his and his family's own food. He grew and butchered his own hogs. He didn't eat beef regularly until the 1950s when they hooked up to the TVA lines and were able to get a freezer. The most exotic food he ever ate was squirrel.

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



Wild Pigs

Wild pigs go by a couple of different names, but any way you spell it, they are trouble. They are a prevalent problem throughout Georgia, and without proper management will only get worse here in the mountains. They do a lot of damage to farmers' crops and to homeowners' lawns and gardens. Let's talk about where these pigs came from, the damage that they cause, and what can be done to control them.

Pigs were originally brought to this side of the world by the Spanish explorers back in the 16th century. They used them for food during their long voyages, and once they arrived on this side of the Atlantic, their population quickly exploded. Some European settlers would practice free-range farming, allowing the pigs to roam as they pleased, which furthered the feral population. When the Great Depression hit in the 1930s, many pigs were released as farmers migrated to the city to find work.

Wild pigs can be found in 45 of the 50 United States. It's estimated that the current wild pig population is about six million in the U.S., with 200,000 to 600,000 residing in Georgia. It's estimated that wild pigs do \$150 million in damage each year in Georgia. About a third of that is done to homeowners. Nationwide, it's estimated that the annual damage done by wild pigs is \$1.5 billion. From these numbers, it's clear that we don't want their populations rising here in the mountains any more than they already have.

Wild pigs are highly adaptable to a wide variety of environments. The females are capable of having six piglets in a litter twice a year. They will consume just about anything that they come across. There are not many natural predators to pigs, and their familial groups keep predators from having access to the young. All of these are reasons why wild pigs can become a huge problem.

So, how can you control wild pigs? There is no silver bullet when it comes to wild pig control. Using fencing to exclude wild pigs from an area is possible, but this is really only practical for small areas. Usually, wire mesh and electric strands are used.

Due to their adaptability and destructive nature, lethal control is often the only viable option when it comes to controlling wild pigs. In Georgia, you are allowed to shoot wild pigs year round -- there is not a wild pig season. Hunting wild pigs with dogs is a popular option, but not a very effective one. You may remove a couple of wild pigs, but the bulk of the family will remain unscathed. Baiting and shooting is also popular.

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Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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