

First Aid

In previous columns, we have written about the major goals of Union County Emergency Management. One major goal is to make Union County a prepared and resilient community. That involves training and preparedness for both public safety and the citizens of Union County. Citizens play an important role. Something that citizens of Union County can do is to learn CPR. Another is to learn First Aid.

First aid training can help you and your community in many ways. The training can teach you how to recognize and deal with an emergency. This is very important due to the time factors of an emergency. Healthcare organizations, such as the American Heart Association, stress the importance of recognizing emergencies early, getting emergency responders on the way, and providing assistance. Emergency situations such as trauma, major bleeding, cardiac arrest, heart attacks, and stroke all are time sensitive. The sooner help can be provided to these situations; the better the outcome.

First aid also lives up to its name, it is the first aid that a person receives. Organized and correct assistance to a person with an emergency can save lives. Sometimes just knowing what is happening and what to do is a big help. People who have had First Aid will fall back on their training and assist the person using the steps taught in the class until more help arrives.

First aid training also teaches a person when more help is needed. Persons with First Aid training can be a great assistance but there are limits. Trained persons will know those limits and have further emergency responders on the way in true emergency situations. Victims of an emergency can then be passed to EMTs and Paramedics who provide further treatment and transport to the appropriate hospital.

A First Aid class usually is several hours and is very informative. The class includes subjects such as how to recognize an emergency; use personal protective equipment; stop bleeding; use an EpiPen; CPR/AED; and many other aspects of emergency response.

First aid knowledge and skills may be needed in any aspect of your day. They can be used at home, at work, or even when

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Christmas Mystery

Something happened in Bethlehem that solved an ancient mystery. The grand reveal began with an inglorious manger. The mystery matters because it was for you.

Adam and Eve first heard of a mysterious person to come. From a 15th C. BC document, we learn that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, but the serpent would only bruise his heel. So, this person has power to crush evil, but not without pain. (Gen. 3:15)

In the 8th C. BC, Assyria tormented the people. During that time a prophet wrote that despite the gloom and anguish, they would be delivered. "A virgin will be with child and bear a son." How could such a child come to be, and how would he effect their deliverance? The answer: "His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa. 7:14, 9:6). It sounded encouraging, even if they didn't know how a virgin-born child, the woman's seed, could be eternal God.

Just as they sensed that their deliverance would be a display of God's power, the clues take a turn. The same prophet said this exalted servant would suffer at the hand of men and God. "He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows. The Lord was pleased to crush Him" (Isa. 53). So, is this Deliverer a child, a man, or God himself? Does He conquer, or does He die? The mystery deepens.

Other prophets of that era proclaim his origins. Bethlehem is His birthplace, but "His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity." Another prophet said He would be from Egypt. (Mic. 5:2, Hos. 11:1). So is the ruler-son from nowhere (eternity), Bethlehem, or Egypt?

Daniel saw the mysterious person's identity in a dream 200 years later. "One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days. To Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom." Two godlike Persons together. One appears human. Daniel also explained the timeline: Jerusalem is rebuilt; Messiah comes. But "the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing," then the temple is destroyed (Dan. 7:14, 9:26). Historians say this happened in 70 AD, so the Messiah must have come by then.

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All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. How do we submit questions for this column?

A. My office number at the courthouse is 706-439-6000. If you call and are unable to speak with me directly or you simply have a question you think the public would be interested in, please tell the secretary that answers the phone. You can also private message me on Facebook if you use that or email the office at commissioner@uniongov.com.

Q. Where do the questions you answer come from?

A. They come from many sources including emails, phone calls, text, Facebook messaging, visiting with the public at church, Farmers Market, meetings, events and the courthouse.

If you tell someone that you can never get in touch with me, it is simply not accurate, except for one exception. Sometimes I may see you somewhere and you tell me your issue or come by the office and it may not get resolved in what you deem to be a timely manner. This is simply because there are often so many issues that it takes time to get with the person that needs to help me reach a decision, or time to visit a particular road problem. For example, currently the Road Department Superintendent and I have 15 or 20 road issues that we simply must have the time to get together and go look at the problem.

Q. Do you ever make up questions that are in the newspaper?

A. Yes, occasionally I do. A person may ask one question regarding a specific subject, but then there may be other subject matter that I feel the public should know about the same subject. I then add questions to provide as much information as possible. You can normally tell when I do this because they tend to be about one main subject. So, the idea will be original, but additional questions serve to help explain the issue better.

Q. After seeing a couple of grocery stores fail in the shopping center behind Rite-Aid, I would like to suggest you work at promoting that space to a store that has apparel. Some of our local stores may need more competition and there should be plenty of business to go around. I really feel Blairsville is large enough to support such a store. Have any stores shown an interest?

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Drug Free Mountain Life

What Parents Should Know About Kids Using CBD

THC is the most well-known component of marijuana, and it is the one that "gets you high," so to speak.

But have you heard of CBD? Many parents haven't, or even if they have, they aren't sure what to make of it or even understand if their son or daughter is using CBD. What's certain is that it's becoming more and more widely available, and like vaping, is often marketed to young people.

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.

CBD, short for Cannabidiol, is the largest non-psychoactive component of marijuana, and interest in its effects is growing. High levels of CBD and low levels of THC are found in most medical marijuana products, but the CBD industry has started to expand and market their products as "life promoting" to healthy individuals.

There are hundreds of online companies

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Letters to the Editor

The Christmas Star

Dear Editor,

As we close in on Christmas Day, we are reminded of the reason for the season. A season where families and friends gather as one, exchanging gifts and love to one another. A season like no other, where God brings forth the beauty of this season of winter and snow. Where kids and adults alike enjoy riding down the slopes or hills in their backyard or skiing in a far-off resort, enjoying a winter wonderland of fun. In homes across our land, Christmas trees are being decorated with glittering lights and ornaments in hopes that old St. Nick will soon be there. The smell of homemade goodies fill the home with an aroma fit for a king, and thus, the "Christmas Star" shone brightly on Christmas day over a stable to welcome the little baby, Jesus, lying in a manger on a bed of hay, not in a luxurious palace in which He deserved, but lowly and humble, like the servant He would become. That "Christmas Star" led shepherds from the fields who came to see this miracle child sent from God, and even wise men from afar brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. What the people didn't know was this little baby Jesus came to save mankind.

According to Psalm 147:4, God flung the stars out in space, and He calls them all by name. Wow! The One who cares for our brokenness is the same God who not only knows the number of the stars, a number so vast that no human mind could conceive, but has a name for each one. If God can do this, He can surely send His only begotten Son, baby Jesus, to earth for the sole purpose of reconciling every person born back to Himself. The "Christmas Star" was a sign to all that God's only begotten Son, Jesus, had been born and was lying in a manger awaiting His time to proclaim the good news of salvation to all who would come to believe. This "Christmas Star" represents hope and eternal life with Jesus Christ when life here is over. Grab hold of this "Christmas Star" sent from God to bring you great tidings, comfort and joy forevermore. Amen.

Frank F. Combs

The Reason We Celebrate

Dear Editor,

Christmas has passed, but let's don't forget the reason we celebrate Christmas. Everywhere you looked, the decorations were beautiful. All the sparkling lights; winking stars; glittering trees; Ho, Ho, Ho's; nativity scenes; bells ringing, etc., help us to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

It doesn't have to be just at Christmas. His name't have to be just at Christmas.

Iris Fox

RC&D

Christmas Tree Fires & Falls

Here is my annual reminder about the increased risk of home fires and injuries during the Christmas season.

We add additional risk to our homes this time of the year with decorations, so be extra careful and pay attention to the rules about holiday fire safety. If you feel the need to get on the roof for some reason, get your 12-year-old to do it because they bounce better than our old folks when hitting the ground. As we approach the holidays many people are focused on decorating for the season and don't think about the risks that they are exposing their homes and businesses to with the decorations. Modern decorations are safer than they used to be but still the risk of a structure fire is definitely increased.

The winter holiday season should be a joyous time of year, however, certain types of fires and injuries associated with holiday decorating are much more common during this season. Here are some statistics from the NFPA that should make you think about the old Christmas tree. NFPA estimates that Christmas trees, both natural and artificial, were the first item ignited in an average of 200 reported home structure fires per year during 2011-2015. These fires caused an estimated average of 6 civilian deaths, 16 civilian injuries, and \$14.8 million in direct property damage per year. These estimates are based on data from the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA's) National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA's) annual fire department experience survey.

During the same period, holiday lights and other decorative lighting with line voltage were involved in an estimated average of 150 home structure fires per year. These fires caused an average of nine civilian deaths, 16 civilian injuries, and \$8.4 million in direct property damage per year although these fires are not common, when they do occur, they are unusually likely to be serious. On average, one of every 32 reported home structure Christmas tree fires resulted in a death compared to an average of one death per 143 total reported home structure fires. Similar shares of home Christmas tree structure fires were in December (43%) and January (39%). Christmas tree fires are more likely after Christmas than before. For example, none of the ten dates with the largest shares of home Christmas tree structure fires were before Christmas. Electrical failures or malfunctions were involved in

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RC&D Executive Director

Frank Riley



Around The Farm

We Need a Miracle

Let me preface this article by telling you it is not meant to be religious in nature. I am simply relating the facts to you as told by my mother. The reason for my telling the story is our time frame. We have entered the Christmas season and yet the world seems to be spinning out of control. We have witnessed major storms and hurricanes, wildfires have decimated the west, people all over the world are angry, and war is killing people all over the world. The situation in the mid-east seems to be pulling the world toward more war. The world needs a miracle. So, my gift to you is this story of a miracle that was witnessed by the staff at a nursing home where my mother worked.

For the past 40 years my father has been a minister and he has served churches in Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama. After my siblings and I moved out of the house my mother went to work. One place in which she worked was a nursing home in Dunlap, TN. Mother enjoys serving the elderly. She has a kind heart and is a good listener. So, she was well received by the residents in the nursing home. The story has 3 characters.

Miss Cora was a little old lady who loved everyone. Mr. Brown was man who couldn't talk and was confined to a wheel chair and Mrs. Jones was confined to bed and was blind.

Miss Cora was kind and gentle lady that had been a resident at this nursing home since her husband had died. Miss Cora was short and always had a smile on her face even when she was in extreme pain. Cora kept a Bible on her night stand and was constantly reading it. When she wasn't reading her Bible Cora would visit the other residents to find out about their prayer concerns. Then she would quietly go back to her room and pray for the other residents. It was easy to see Cora's faith in her eyes, you could hear faith in her testimony and you could feel her faith through her prayers.

But, Cora did not try to push her faith over anyone. She was quiet and unassuming. She would listen to your beliefs and smile. All she wanted you to know was that God loved you so much He sent his son to die for you. She believed this was God's gift to mankind. And she lived this belief every day. She never worried about wars, economics or climate change.

Each day before mother left work Cora would smile at her and say, "I'll be going home soon and I'll get to see Jesus. If I am not here when you come back to work you'll know where

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



What are Invasive Species

You may have heard of invasive species. It's a pretty hot topic in the agricultural and environmental world these days. For some people invasive species may bring up images of pythons in the Everglades. While we don't have any pythons in the woods around here (and I am very thankful for that) we do have many invasive species that have a drastic impact on our environment and economy. Let's talk about invasive species, how they got here, and what you can do to prevent the spread of invasive species.

Invasive species can be plants, animals, insects, or diseases. We have some of each of those up here. Sometimes invasive species are brought in intentionally with good intent. That is the case with Kudzu. Kudzu was originally brought in by the US government to help provide erosion control. Kudzu can do a very good job of that, but most of the time it goes overboard and takes over entire fields. Asian lady bugs are another example of an invasive that was brought in for a good purpose. Asian lady bugs help control aphid populations in pecan orchards. However, they also decide to spend the winter in people's homes sometimes.

Wild pines are an invasive species that were originally brought by the European settlers as a food source. Autumn olive was brought over because of the attractive red berries that it has. Japanese knotweed has been popping up here and has been used as an ornamental plant. Empress tree was also brought over as an ornamental plant. The hemlock woolly Adelgid was accidentally brought in to Virginia and has worked its way southward, destroying hemlock trees along its path.

Invasive species can cause a lot of damage to existing native populations. Sometimes they can wipe out native populations entirely. This is usually because the natural predators that exist in the invasive species' natural home aren't present, giving them free rein. One might think that a solution would be to introduce the predators as well. This is usually not done because of the concern that introducing another invasive species will only make the issue worse in the long run.

Not all non-native species that have been introduced are known for decimating the environment. In fact honey bees were not present in North America until Europeans brought them over. There are other species of bees which are native and are active pollinators, but the honey bee had to be brought over by settlers. Honey bees are usually not thought of as being an evil invasive species, and rightfully so, because of

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Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

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Publisher/Owner

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Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Sports Editor

Mark Smith
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 - One Year \$40. 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, 1981, 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.

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