

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### Drug Use In College

Most parents who have a hunch that their kids might be using drugs at college don't get a definitive signal, and the kids themselves don't always get the scare of an overdose to put the fear of drugs in their soul. But, just because these kids don't end up in the ER doesn't mean that their casual drug use isn't just as insidious. Statistically, half of college kids use drugs (not including alcohol), and 20% are seriously abusing them. It's important to take a look at the warning signs that a college student may be using the most common of the illicit drugs, since some of the signs may be easily overlooked or mistaken for the simple symptoms of a young adult's college lifestyle.

*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. Visit and Like our Facebook page for additional articles and videos.*

The most commonly abused drugs on college campuses across the country fall into five drug types. The first is prescription stimulants. ADD or ADHD drugs like Adderall and Ritalin are being purchased illegally by students and used as a study-aid for tests, to improve focus, and to enjoy the accompanying dopamine rush that causes feelings of euphoria. Because these amphetamines are legally available by prescription, students see them as less harmful than street drugs, but be warned. These are Schedule II substances, just like cocaine and crystal meth. In a previous era, we just called them "speed", and the modern version - most commonly Adderall or its generic substitute - is really no different, metabolically speaking. It's an amphetamine, and it should only be used under the strict care of a physician.

Prescription opiates or "painkillers" are next. Every time you turn on the news, there's another tragedy involving prescription painkillers like Oxycodone or Hydrocodone. Known more popularly by their common brand names like Vicodin or Percocet, these drugs are wreaking havoc on people of all incomes, ethnicities, and ages. It often starts with a valid prescription for pain, filled innocently after a dental problem or a knee injury, but the rush and general good feelings associated with taking these pills proves to be too much to resist. After the pain is gone and the prescription runs out, getting more of it from a drug dealer is expensive, so millions

of people are turning to heroin for a cheaper and similar opiate-driven high.

Not as popular as marijuana, cocaine still makes appearances on campuses across the country. It is highly addictive, and is frequently the culprit in fatal overdoses. What makes cocaine even more serious of a threat on campus is that 80% of college students drink alcohol. When cocaine is mixed with alcohol, a viciously toxic third chemical called Cocaethylene is formed in the liver. Cocaethylene has been blamed for heart attacks in the under-40 age group.

Ecstasy or Molly, otherwise known as MDMA, is a wildly popular party drug sensationalized everywhere from rap music to sitcoms. The pill produces feelings of pleasure, emotional warmth, and increased energy. Despite its benign reputation, it's not all pretty: the drug can lead to prolonged panic attacks, bouts of depression, and severe hangovers. Some students have died from purchasing ecstasy that was laced with other chemicals.

Controversy swirls around marijuana as many states have legalized weed for medicinal use and even some for recreational purposes. This doesn't mean the drug can't be harmful or addictive. About half of college students admit to using marijuana in the last year. The biggest concern among most parents is the general association between marijuana use and a decline in

See Drug Use, page 5A

### Letters to the Editor...

#### Church and State

Dear Editor,  
The Union County American Cancer Society volunteers who serve your community have a proven track record that is unparalleled to other communities of similar size and economic status. This year marked my third year with ACS in my role as senior Community Relay For Life Specialist. During my time with these volunteers, I have witnessed their determination not only to carry out the ACS/RFL mission but they go beyond their volunteer roles by serving those who are burdened by cancer.

As the ACS Staff partner, I would like to thank our 2016 Event Leadership Chair, Mia Crowe. She accepted the challenges with graciousness and guts. Working closely with Mia and all the volunteers, I have witnessed the successes of the 22nd annual Relay For Life.

Also, may I extend my personal thank you to such a caring and supportive community. You are awesome!

Thank you Mia Crowe, all the 2016 Leadership Event volunteers and Union County!  
Sincerely,

Brooke VanBuskirk  
ACS Senior Community Specialist

#### Jefferson's Bible

Dear Editor,  
At last, a rational letter instead of church bulletin material. Last week, Mr. Ed Reed addressed some base issues that those on the religious right should study carefully, before making ignorant statements, such as the one regarding "In God we Trust".

Mr. Reed mentioned the Jefferson Bible, of which I have a copy, and have read much of it. Jefferson, and others of the time, placed reason and logic ahead of religious dogma. It is indeed a shame that so many of the so-called religious right seem blinded by pulpit oratory and refuse to accept reality when it conflicts with their beliefs.

I, personally, have never really believed any of the so-called 'miracles', related in the Gospels. After all, the oldest Gospel was written many years after the death of Jesus, and like most stories, get better with age. Taking away the supernatural events does not lessen the importance of lessons and advice that is attributed to Jesus. Reading Jefferson's Bible will confirm this.

So thank you, Ed Reed, for an interesting and informative (I hope) letter.

William Parks

### Not God's Type

Dr. Holly Ordway was a young English professor. She wasn't just a secular-minded young professional, but an antagonistic atheist. Not exactly in the demographic of likely candidates for conversion to Christianity. But it happened.

She wrote about it in her book *Not God's Type* in 2008. In 2014, she decided to re-write it. The reason is captured in the sub-title change from "a rational academic finds a radical faith" to "an atheist academic lays down her arms." The first implied that her conversion was mostly her doing; the second, her surrender to God's work in her mind and heart.

She was raised in a family that was culturally but not actually Christian. She thought of Christianity as a historical curiosity, and preferred a rationalism that trusts science to explain everything. Christians were self-deluded as they tried to follow their morality as a set of rules and pious slogans. She "didn't know that the church offered a relationship with a living person who would transform you into a new person."

Dr. Ordway's rational mind began to challenge her atheistic faith when she realized, "I could not explain why I had this moral sense, and my efforts fell short of my ideals." Seeking answers, she turned to writings by C.S. Lewis and found his explanation of the moral argument for God compelling. She also read works by William Lane Craig, Gary Habermas, and N.T. Wright. She concluded that the Resurrection of Christ is historical and believable, and has personal implications.

In the re-write of her book, she added the other components of her life that led to faith: imagination and literature. She said, "My atheist view of the world could not explain why I was moved by beauty and cared about truth." As a student of literature, she names Lewis and Tolkien as favorite authors. She found that the moving poems of Hopkins, Herbert, and Donne could not be separated from their Christianity. From them she caught "a vision of the world that was richly meaningful and beautiful, and that also made sense of the joy and sorrow that I could experience."

See Fowler, page 5A

#### All Things New

Wayne Fowler



### Commissioner's Questions

**Q. How many miles of county maintained roads are there in Union County?**

A. A lot. There are approximately 560 miles. Just to remind you how far this is, this is equivalent to driving from Blairsville to just South of Orlando, FL or just South of Washington, DC, or just East of Little Rock, Arkansas. You can then double the 560 miles to 1,120 while cleaning ditches on both sides of each road. If you have to make several passes mowing, it would get to thousands of miles for the tractors. Mowing is a mammoth job.

Of those roads, 420 miles are paved and 138 miles are gravel. This does not include 8 miles of paved streets within the city of Blairsville and 2.6 miles school campus roads.

**Q. We have heard about the term "surface treatment paving. What is that?"**

A. There are basically two types of paving that the county uses. One is asphalt and the other we call "surface treatment". Surface treatment has several names, tar and chip, chip and seal, or just a name of what it actually is, "tar and gravel". Instead of spreading one thick layer of asphalt, surface treatment paving, if done correctly, will have at least 6" of compacted gravel underneath and then there are four alternating layers of tar and gravel, with each layer being smaller and smaller rock.

**Q. What are the advantages of Surface treatment paving vs asphalt paving?**

A. It is all in the eye of the beholder. While it is a relatively thin surface, it has amazing characteristics of longevity if properly installed. The main reason we use it in the county is because it allows us to pave nearly twice as many roads as we normally could since the cost is about 40% less than asphalt paving. Our Road Department does our own surface treatment, so we can do it whenever the need arises and without additional contractor assistance or cost. So, it is less expensive, and it has a better rural and country road look as it blends better than black asphalt.

**Q. What are the disadvantages of "surface treatment" paving?**

See Paris, page 5A

### Scottish Festival

This year marks the 13th annual Blairsville Scottish Festival & Highland Games which is being held June 10th, 11th and 12th. This is one of our family's favorite festivals as the Allison's are of Scottish descent and there is something for everyone to enjoy. It gives us an opportunity to experience a "wee bit of Scotland" in our own back yard. Come ready to enjoy great music, great food, and a lot of fun!

This year, the festival kicks off on Friday evening, June 10th, with Scottish Music and Entertainment at the Historic Courthouse. The remainder of the weekend's activities will be held at Meeks Park beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday with the athletic events. From the open stone, to the caber toss, and the sheaf toss, these events are a test of strength and determination.

If you enjoy learning about Scottish Heritage, stop by and visit with the members of the Clans. They are always glad to share their knowledge of their Family Crest and Tartan with visitors. You may even find a family connection to Scotland that you were not aware of!

You can also enjoy watching Border collie demonstrations, entertainment by Colin Grant-Adams, and performances by the Glencoe Highland Dancers throughout the weekend. Each year, I look forward to the opening ceremony which takes place at noon on Saturday. The Clans proudly march in wearing their family tartans to the sound of the pipe and drum bands. If you have children ages 3-13 stop by the kids' area.

See Allison, page 5A

### Mason Bees

We're all familiar with those dreaded carpenter bees that chew holes in the sides of our decks, houses and picnic tables. However, many people are not as familiar with the carpenter bee's much less destructive cousin, the mason bee. These little bees are beneficial pollinators of fruiting trees and numerous flowers. They are found throughout North America and while they prefer heavily forested areas, they have adapted well to city life and become closely associated with urban landscapes and homes.

Instead of chewing holes in dried wood, mason bees choose holes and cavities that are already present. You may even see them squeezing through an opening in your siding to form their nests. Though they are beneficial, many people still may not be too fond of the idea of bees living in the outside walls. Instead of spraying harmful insecticides on these beneficial insects, simply use caulking to fill any gaps in siding, fascia or other wooden joints around your home to prevent mason bees from nesting.

These little bees are slightly smaller than the European honey bee. However, their size can vary because it depends on how big their nest was. Males are always smaller than females, have a lightly colored tuft on the front of their face and long antennae. Females are larger and have a clump of hairs on their underbellies known as a "scopa" which is used to collect pollen for their young to eat.

A few days after she emerges, the female mason bee mates and goes in search of a home. When she finds an appropriate tunnel, she will create a plug made of mud at the very end of it. She will then place about 15 to 20 loads of pollen and nectar in the hole, lay an egg, then seal that part of the tunnel with another mud plug. She will repeat this pattern several times in one tunnel, so each nest may contain several bee larvae. After the larvae hatches, it can take about two weeks for it to consume its pollen and nectar reserves

See Mattee, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber  
Regina Allison



### Summer Safety

June is my favorite month. I look forward to it all year. When I see June 1st on the calendar I think, "It's finally summer." The kids are out of school and it's time for outside adventures on those long summer days. Unfortunately it's also the time for sunburns, injuries and accidents. In the summer, the fire department sees a transition from calls involving fires to the accidents associated with summer time activities. Union County Fire Department would like to remind you to practice some safety tips to ensure a fun and happy summer.

Swimming is a favorite summer activity. When swimming, keep in mind these few swimming safety tips. Never leave young children alone when swimming; always have an adult present. Although we want to have fun, running and horse play is very dangerous around a pool so no running, wild swimming adventures or swimming stunts. Swimmers should also be aware of water depth and should not dive in shallow water. Have safety equipment and flotation devices near the pool or swimming area for emergencies. If there is a swimming incident, you want to be prepared. A CPR class would provide lifesaving information and skills to help prepare you for these emergencies.

Another activity of the summer that may cause accidents is riding motorcycles and ATVs. These activities can be fun but they can also be dangerous. Always wear your safety gear. Helmets are a must. Head injuries are a leading cause of death from motorcycle accidents. Use caution on rough and steep terrain. Never operate a motorcycle or ATV under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

There are other general summer safety tips that you can do to prevent injuries and illness this summer. Keep cool by staying out of the sun as much as possible. Keep hydrated with water and avoid other drinks that only seem to keep you hydrated. Wear sun screen. Skin cancer is real and every moment that you expose your skin without sunscreen increases your risk. Even on partly cloudy days, wear sunscreen. If you are traveling this summer, use extra caution on the road. Highway traffic increases in the summer time. More traffic means a higher risk of accidents. Watch out for other drivers and reduce speed.

We all want to enjoy our summer. Union County Fire Department wants to remind you that following some safety tips and keeping safety in mind will help prevent summer accidents so that we can enjoy our summer, family and friends. Union County Fire Department  
~ Our Family Protecting Your Family ~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief  
David Dyer



### Meet me at the Market

Sherdon Totherow has been selling jams, jellies, peaches, watermelons and cantaloupes for more than 60 years. Sherdon began his career in the produce business as a teenager with a team of mules. The family farm was located on Mulkey Gap Road. Sherdon has sold produce out of stands in Blairsville, Hayesville, and Hiawassee. He has regular customers that come from as far away as Cumming and Franklin. When located in Hiawassee his store was next to the Old Music Hall and some of Sherdon's fondest memories are of watching Minnie Pearl and Willie Nelson perform. You can find Sherdon in space number 23 in Building A at the Farmers Market.

Hal Crisp can be found in space number 29 in Building A. Hal is originally from the Beech Creek area up close to Murphy, North Carolina. He has been married to Bertha for 35 years and they have lived up on Mount Pleasant Church Road since 1979. Hal loves the Farmers Market because it gives him a chance to talk to his customers. He really loves to answer gardening questions. He enjoys steering people down the right path. He has been a Sunday School teacher for a number of years and says it is the most difficult job he has ever had.

You can find jams, jellies, sweet potatoes, and Irish potatoes at Hal's stall. He also sells some okra, corn, squash and white half runner beans as well as some crafts and some hand sewn items. So, come out to the Farmers Market and ask Hal some gardening questions.

Freddie and Julie Collins along with their sons, Dakota and Grayson Collins are a family operation and they come by it through genetics. Freddie comes from a long list of ancestors whose primary occupations were as farmers. Five or 6 generations, including his Dad E.J. of Collins farmers have preceded Freddie and his farm. Freddie was raised with 5 brothers and 2 sisters on their family farm at the foot of Bald Mountain. Julie's background in farming is extensive as well. Her father, Harvey Jackson, worked at the Georgia Mountain Branch Experiment Station for more than 36 years. He also grew corn and hay as a sideline for years. Julie used to swear that she would never marry a farmer. Yet, here she is 23 years later the wife of a large vegetable producer.

Julie has worked for a number of years at the UCHS Cafeteria while Freddie raised hogs, sorghum, okra, green beans, corn, collards, cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes and watermelons. Dakota is entering his senior year of high

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm  
Mickey Cummings



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