

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Life-Saving Education

A couple of weeks ago, Union County Fire Department and several partners had the pleasure of introducing training on life-saving techniques to the upcoming Union County High School Freshman class. The training was part of the Freshman Leadership and Health summer classes.

Students were educated on performing Hands-Only CPR, the use of Automated External Defibrillators, and the Stop the Bleed program. Partners for this education were the Union County School System, Union County Fire Department, Union General Ambulance Service, and Air Life Georgia 14.

My daughter, Amelia, will be a freshman next school year. While attending the orientation on high school and the Freshman Leadership and Health summer class, we were amazed at the number of students attending this class.

We were in the process of planning to provide CPR and Stop the Bleed training at the high school, so we saw the perfect opportunity to teach these classes during the summer session. We approached the school system, which enthusiastically welcomed the class and graciously carved out time from the busy schedule to conduct this class.

The fire department partnered with the Union General Ambulance Service that is part of Union General Hospital, and the local medical helicopter service, Air Life Georgia 14. All partners took part in conducting the class and educating the students.

Students learned the importance of CPR and chest compressions. Each student received an opportunity to practice providing compressions and was taught to push "hard and fast." The Automated External Defibrillator, or AED, was shown to students. They were taught when and how to use the life-saving machine in conjunction with Hands-Only CPR. Students were introduced to the Stop the Bleed programs, where they learned how to control bleeding using bandages, how to pack wounds, and even how to use tourniquets.

The ultimate goals of the class were to make students aware of these types of emergencies; to educate students on life-saving measures; and to give students the confidence to act in these types of emergency situations. It is everyone's responsibility to act in an emergency to save a life. Calling 911 can get help on the way, but we need to have an educated, skilled and confident community that will step up and act in an emergency. Teaching our young men and women these skills may save your life one day.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Living Water

Water is vital to life. You realize that so much more when you're in a place that has much less of it.

Haiti is a place like that. In 1990, I accepted the challenge to restart an NGO well-drilling program in the Artibonite Valley. Dr. Larry Mellon, inspired by Albert Schweitzer, drew from his family's fortune to found a hospital there in 1956. Drilling wells for clean water was a way he could reduce admissions. He completed hundreds of wells while he was able. Mrs. Mellon tells her story in her autobiography, "My Road To Deschapelles."

When I arrived, Dr. Mellon had just passed. Boss Murat had drilled wells with Mellon for years, and despite his advanced years was available to help. Mellon had commissioned the construction of a cable tool rig that could drill up to 200 feet deep. Though that rig was long gone, we learned that similar rigs in various stages of disrepair still existed in country. We finally located and purchased one from the Baptists.

The re-building effort meant machine shop and carpentry work. It was a contraption of wooden wheels, belts, heavy bit and bailer, and a single cylinder diesel engine, all bolted to a repurposed heavy truck frame. We made an ad hoc wood lathe to turn the main drive wheel to look like the iron one on the restored steam tractor from my Auburn days.

What a scene when we first fired up the whirring, clanking apparatus! It reminded Mrs. Mellon of her dear Larry's work. But we weren't there just to restore a drilling machine. I had an engineering degree but never drilled a well. Murat was thrilled that his dated experience had renewed significance. We were quite a pair.

We began the grueling work to access potable water for a growing population. It meant traveling for days, sleeping and eating in quite rustic conditions. Breakdowns happened. Repair parts were fabricated or ordered. The machine had few safety shields. One time, a rotating part caught Murat's coveralls and began a deadly twist. I shut it down in time to avert a terrible accident.

Facing danger and challenges to implement a water plan is

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All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Why is the Weaver Road entrance to the Farmers Market going to be closed once the new entrance is built from Hwy 515/ Gooch By-Pass?

A. Unfortunately, you have received some false information about this. The current road access to the Farmers Market from Weaver Road will remain open for access. It is just that when the new Highway 515 widening project work is completed from Blairsville to Young Harris (estimated 2021), it will be so much easier to access the Farmers Market from the new entrance at the red light. We also understand that a center median may be installed by GDOT once the new highway is completed, making it impossible to make a left turn out of Weaver Road onto Hwy 515 unless you are an emergency vehicle, working similarly to the new intersection coming out of Walmart, called an R-Cut by GDOT.

Q. We saw in the NGN last week that the sheriff was going to be selling a home on the Union Courthouse steps, located at 352 Town Mountain Road. Can we go look at the home?

A. If you read the ad carefully, it stated that the home will have an open house on Friday, June 22, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Saturday, June 23, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (you have missed these two dates already), and on Thursday, June 28, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., with the sale on Tuesday, July 3, 2018, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on the courthouse steps.

Q. I saw you at the Farmers Market and told you about a road issue that needed taken care of, but it has been nearly a month and the culvert is still stopped up. Why is this?

A. As most of you know, I am very accessible and I receive a lot of questions and complaints at all kinds of places. I do not mind receiving these questions, and whether it is at church, the Farmers Market, a ball game, or at a chamber function, I always try to take time to listen. I also try to take quick notes about checking on a particular issue. In this case, either I failed to write it down correctly, or I may have simply forgotten to call the road department. But let me tell you how it works the best.

If you have an issue with anything dealing with the Road Department, please call them at 706-439-6062. If you see me and tell me, then I try to interpret what you said and pass it along to the Road Department. But if you call them directly, they will know exactly what you need directly from your mouth without any interpretation necessary.

Q. What do we do if we call the Road Department and the work we requested does not get completed?

A. That is the best time to call me or my office at 706-439-6000. Let our office, or me, know who you are, the address of the road issue, and what

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Drug Free Mountain Life

How to know if your kid is vaping marijuana - and what to do about it

Hardly a week goes by without another news article about vaping. In 2014, vaping was selected as Oxford Dictionary's word of the year, beating out other candidates like "Bae" and "Buddender." If they were picking a word today, it would more likely be JUUL or Juuling, the wildly popular "stealth vape" of adolescents.

Juuling kids are vaporizing flavored e-juices with nicotine, but what about vaping marijuana? According to Monitoring the Future, an annual survey of nearly 50,000 adolescents, 3 percent, 8 percent and 10 percent of eighth, 10th, and 12th-graders respectively had vaped marijuana in 2017.

According to a study published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, e-cigarettes use may lead to marijuana initiation. The authors hypothesize that e-cigarette use may be a marker of risk-taking behaviors, and that e-cigarette users are more likely to smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol, which are associated with marijuana use.

There is also the concern that vaping nicotine, which is in Juuls and many other vaping devices, may pave the way to other substance use problems in the developing adolescent brain. Aggressive marketing in states where marijuana has been legalized may also contribute to increased curiosity about marijuana while at the same time reducing its perceived harm.

How is marijuana vaped? Vaping refers to the inhalation of an aerosol produced by heating a liquid/oil or substance in a compact electronic portable vaporizer. While many young "vapers" say they inhale flavored liquids like Gummy Bear, German Chocolate Cake and Cotton Candy, youth can vaporize marijuana - either the ground plant itself, waxes often referred to as dabs, or THC and CBD oils.

Selling equipment to vape marijuana in its leaf, dab or oil form is a booming business with many new entrants. Pax Labs, formerly Ploom, was founded over a decade ago and is a relatively well-known brand for vaping dry leaf marijuana. The company has introduced the Pax 3, which they describe as the "Apple iPhone" of vaporizers, as it allows you to vape both dry leaf and wax concentrates. It includes a free Android or iOS app to control temperature, play free games, manage firmware and lock the device.

In California, a company called EAZE sells disposable all-in-one marijuana vape pens and cartridges. Flavors include Blueberry Kush, Lemon OG and Mango Passion Fruit. They market these as wellness products with advertising that reads, "Hello Marijuana, Goodbye Insomnia" or "Hello Marijuana, Goodbye Hangover." Although not a vape per se, another company, Aeroinhaler, has developed a product that looks exactly like an inhaler one would use to treat asthma. It's marketed as a healthy alternative to vaping or smoking combustible marijuana, delivering a metered dose with each puff. The company says that their product uses concentrates of 80 percent THC potency.

Juul can also be used to vape marijuana; however, it should be noted that as of now, Juul does not offer marijuana products. The device must be hacked in order to use it with THC oils and, as with most things, there are YouTube videos demonstrating how. There are also compa-

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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.

"Great! Looks like everybody is on board but those guys, whoever they are..."



Letters to the Editor

The Iron Lady is gone

Dear Editor,

The Iron Lady, my darling bride of 52 years, died on June 6 at 6:15 a.m. Her last 12 hours were in relative peace, but the month leading up to her death was torture, pain and suffering no human or animal should ever have to endure. Jesus suffered on the cross for approximately six hours before he died a painful and horrible death. My Iron Lady suffered pain, agony and torment very few, including me, could endure for weeks. Not days, not hours, but weeks! Some may ask, "How can I possibly compare her death to that of Jesus?" Like this: If I were given the choice to die nailed on the cross compared to dying as my darling wife did, I would choose the cross! Some will find that statement unbelievable until they experience it firsthand or watch a dear loved one suffer as she did.

My dog, with incurable cancer, died a peaceful and humane death, while my wife, with cancer, did not! The phrase "doctor-assisted suicide" connotes a negative image and should be changed to "Physician of Mercy."

When helplessly watching her suffer, and while she could still speak and knew she was dying, I asked my darling wife if I could help her to die and end her pain and suffering. Her mind was still sharp and ever so wise, and in spite of her pain and agony, she said no! And then she made me promise several things. Her final words to me were, "Just know that I always loved you." That was several days before she became incoherent and could only answer yes or no, and then finally more days of no response at all except gurgles

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"First Class" skilled nursing facility

Dear Editor,

Congratulations Union County for a having a "First Class" skilled nursing facility.

My wife and I recently had the privilege of visiting a dear friend in the Union County Nursing Home. We were both overwhelmed with amazement by the cleanliness and the friendly, caring staff with attitudes that impressed us both.

I represented two large skilled nursing homes and an Alzheimer's assisted-living facility in South Florida as Marketing and Admission Director. During those years, I had the opportunity to visit/inspect other facilities, from Marco Island north to Ft. Myers, Florida, and all of Collier County. I saw the very best to the very worst and everything in between. Union County residents, you should be very proud knowing you have a First Class facility.

Thank You,

Jack Dixon

Dowling Park, Florida/Blairsville, Georgia

Around The Farm

Fred McGhee

Fred McGhee was a coon-hunting machine. He hunted six or seven nights a week, 52 weeks of every year. Fred was extraordinarily poor, and a large portion of his income came from the hides he captured through coon hunting. Fred had a large family that required a lot of food, and his regular job of logging just wouldn't pay for all the food required by his family. At least that was his excuse for all the time spent in the woods away from his wife and children.

Fred was also described by many in our little community as a "big blow." Fred was adept at making you think that he was better than anyone else at almost anything. He had better dogs, better hunting territory, and was more knowledgeable about the woods than anyone else. Even with all that was known about his bragging, Fred was well-liked, and people enjoyed his company on a hunting trip. My Dad said that he enjoyed hunting with Fred because he was entertaining and fun to listen to.

One night in August, Dad set up a hunting trip with Uncle Mack, Uncle Rufus and Fred. They decided to hunt over in the "Section." This area is now a part of the Bankhead National Forest close to Double Springs, Alabama. The area is drained by the Sipsey River, which eventually feeds into the Black Warrior River. The topography of the "Section" is comprised by rolling hills with the occasional deep hollow. At one time, there were many farms located in the area, but during the depression, many of these marginal land farms had been abandoned.

The federal government came in during the 1930s and bought up all these old farms and created the national forest.

On this particular hot and sultry night in August, these three men and my Dad, who was a teenager, walked far back into the area to the treeing dogs. A treeing dog has spent some time trailing a raccoon to a tree. When the coon climbs the tree, the dog comes to the tree and belches out a different type of bark than when the coon is still on the ground. Anywhere, when they all came to their dogs, they knew there was a problem. The raccoon had climbed a massive tulip poplar. The coon was hiding in the top of the tree amongst all the leaves, and to make matters worse, the trunk of the poplar was covered with gigantic poison ivy vines. The men could not find the coon, and normally, Dad would climb the tree to find the animal.

However, Dad didn't want to develop a

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



Ticks

If you didn't see the article about me in last week's paper, let me introduce myself. My name is Jacob Williams, and I am the new Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent. I hope that this weekly column will be informative, relevant and conversational. I decided on the title "Watching and Working" because my hope is that, together, we can watch and see areas where improvement is possible. As those areas are discovered, I want to work with the community to educate and network to find solutions and improve results. Now that all of that has been said, let's get into the content of this week's column.

Have you seen ticks this year? I've been seeing a lot of them. Let's talk about why there are so many, what damage they can do, and how to keep them from getting a free meal off of you or your animals.

According to the CDC, ticks that spread disease can have life cycles that last two to three years. There are many things that factor into tick population, including temperature, rainfall, humidity and available hosts (deer, mice and other animals). As stated by UGA Extension, ticks start in an egg mass of approximately 6,000 eggs. After hatching, they are called seed ticks; they have six legs and will climb up a blade of grass and wait for an unsuspecting host to come along. After feeding, the seed tick will drop off and shed its skin, resulting in a nymph that has eight legs. The nymph will feed, drop off and shed its skin, reaching its final form as an adult tick.

There are three main species of ticks that are found in Georgia: the Lone Star tick, American dog tick, and black-legged tick. The Lone Star tick can be identified by a small white star on its back and does not cause any known diseases. The most common tick disease in Georgia is Rocky Mountain Spotted-Fever, which is primarily carried by the American dog tick. A spotted rash appears two to four days after the onset of fever.

Lyme disease is carried by the black-legged tick. The initial symptom of Lyme is a ring-like swollen rash. Joint pain and flu-like symptoms are also common. People should monitor their health closely after any tick bite and consult their physician if they experience a rash, fever, headache, joint or muscle pains, or swollen lymph nodes within 30 days of a tick bite. These can be signs of a number of tick-borne diseases.

The best way to avoid ticks is to avoid areas where vegetation is over ankle height. If that's not possible, then make sure that you wear long pants and tuck your pants into your socks, and your shirt into your pants. You may not win any awards on the fashion runway, but hopefully you'll be tick free! Use a repellent that contains DEET. Spraying DEET on your skin and clothes will help keep them away. If you go out hiking or are working outside, check yourself when you come back inside. The longer an infected tick feeds, the higher the likelihood of them transmitting to you. If a tick does bite, remove the tick with forceps, grabbing it as near to the point of attachment as possible. Pull it firmly and steadily so that the mouthparts won't be broken off in the skin. Disinfect the bite and wash your hands.

Finally, if you have a question about a tick, the Extension Office may be able to help with identifying which species it is. There's no way to tell if a tick is carrying a disease, but knowing the species will help eliminate possible diseases.

Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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