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wide on accountability courts to help keep our jail populations smaller, it should leave our jail still capable of supporting our criminal population for several years to come.

Q. There is an article in this week's paper regarding a \$28,754 dividend the County will be receiving in the form of a credit toward our Property and Liability insurance premium for 2017-2018. How much will this help the cost of Property and Liability insurance for the County?

A. This is one of many advantages the county enjoys with our active involvement with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, (ACCG). When overall losses of all the counties combined are below estimates, each county receives a share this year of a \$3 million dividend. Insurance is a large cost for counties, and Union County is no exception so this credit toward the premium is a huge help. Our property and liability insurance for the upcoming year will be \$253,323. This credit will go toward this premium and Union County also receives a Safety Credit in the amount of \$10,000. This decreases the amount we have to pay to \$214,569 and is a large savings to our budget.

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Warriors the community's sales tax numbers are on the increase. Having said that, let's quickly review the benefits of our sales tax dollars and the importance of buying local. Union County has a 7% sales tax.

The first four pennies go to the State of Georgia. Of the three remaining, one goes to ES-PLOST and that is solely used for our awesome school system, one goes to SPLOST and the other goes to LOST. SPLOST dollars go to our County government for capital expenditures like roads, equipment, and buildings like the library, Saddle Club, Farmers Market and Cannery, the amazing Meeks Park, and more. LOST dollars go to the operation of the County government & comes directly off your property taxes, which means continued property relief for you! Without tourism tax dollars, our 2015 property taxes, on average, would have been \$114 higher per household and in 2016 that number would have increased to \$207.

Our goal is not to grow our town so big that you cannot recognize it. We are not trying to be like Blue Ridge or Franklin or Asheville. We all live and work here too. The same reasons that you love our small town are the same reasons we love it as well. Because we love our town

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Try to keep in mind that teens are going to make mistakes to learn life's hard lessons. They are going to do things that you don't like, and they will learn more if the lines of communication are wide open. Sometimes that means hearing a lot that you would rather not, or agreeing to some things that you would rather not. If we have a better idea of what is really going on in their world, then hopefully we can better steer them in the right direction.

Parenting styles differ widely, and what works for some doesn't work for others. One parent may believe that if their kids ever want to get puking drunk, they should do it in a monitored environment where they know that they are safe. They know that they have the freedom to experiment within the rules, and if they were ever caught in the car with an impaired driver, or breaking other "iron-clad" rules, there would be extreme consequences. Another household may have zero tolerance under 21.

Drive your kids through the bad side of town and show

Duncan Dobie, Writer/Photographer

Do you love the outdoors, whitetail deer, and history? Well, you're in for a treat! The Union County Historical Society has invited Duncan Dobie, nationally renowned outdoor writer, whitetail expert and former editor of "North American Whitetail" magazine, to speak at the Union County Historic Courthouse on July 11 at 7 p.m. He's the author of nine books and a Georgia resident with encyclopedic knowledge of these legendary deer.

Notably, one of his books is titled, *Arthur Woody and The Legend of The Barefoot Ranger*. This is the story of the conservationist and humanitarian forest ranger from Suches who brought deer back to the North Georgia mountains in the early 1900s.

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. For more information, you may call (706) 745-5493.

Q. Did the County's premium go up from last year?

A. Our premium for the upcoming year actually went down slightly and our dividend increased this year. Our total amount paid decreased \$7,034 from last year. While this may not seem like a huge sum of money, it actually indicates that our employees have worked hard to make sure the equipment and properties are all listed correctly and they are performing their jobs in a very safe manner.

Q. How does the county get the \$10,000 Safety Credit?

A. To be eligible for the Safety Credit the County has to participate in specific safety training and safety inspections. This training is offered by a risk management company and provided by ACCG. The training is free and certain county employees participate in monthly safety meetings. The risk management company also comes and does quarterly safety inspections on county facilities and employee work habits. They make suggestions to our Safety Coordinator, who works with the different departments to make the work environment as safe as possible for employees and the public.

so much is why we continue to strategically promote the area. There is an old adage that says "if you're not growing, your dying". Slow and managed growth is the goal, not fast uncontrollable growth.

Remember what happened in 2009 when the recession hit? I remember driving through small towns very similar to ours that were completely abandoned. There were whole strip malls that were deserted, factories closed, and the residents had to flee. By diversifying our economic footprint now, we will protect ourselves from such occurrences in the future.

Almost half of our county is protected by National Forest. Another large portion of our land use is dedicated to farming and livestock. Just those two factors alone limit growth and development. Our topography is not conducive to large plants, so you never worry about getting an automotive plant or anything similar here. We are looking to attract visitors to enjoy our area, spend their dollars, go home and come back again for another fun filled trip!

To further discuss this or for more information about the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, call 706-745-5789 or go to Visit-BlairsvilleGA.com.

them what a 40-year-old drug addict looks like and how they live. They will all tell you that they just started with a little "weed and wine" as a teenager. Nobody intends to end up like that.

The best advice that anyone can offer a parent is to step up to the plate, as scary as it may sound. Start a drug and alcohol testing program and stick with it. Learn everything about teen drug use. Talk to other parents and know what to look for as far as drug paraphernalia, the drug language and the physical signs of use. Let them know that you trust them, but that your comfort depends on you being able to verify that trust through testing.

Most importantly, parents should be able to work together to keep their kids healthy and safe. Convince your kids that it is not impossible to find friends that do not do drugs. Since all kids lie to their parents - no matter how open the relationship, let them know when you think they are being less than totally honest with you. It's a test. Don't fail, and don't ever give up on your kids!

ARTHUR WOODY And The Legend Of The Barefoot Ranger



The Man Who Brought Deer Back to the North Georgia Mountains

By Duncan Dobie

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effective option for controlling mummy berry infections. Spraying with captan at budbreak and at first flower, when your plants are most vulnerable, will provide the greatest protection. There are also alternatives such as Serenade MAX (a Bacillus subtilis product) and lime sulfur. However, captan is the most effective treatment currently approved for use against mummy berry.

Sanitation is without a doubt the most important part of preventing this fungal disease from damaging your plants. Even if you spray fungicides appropriately, if mummies are still under your bushes, you are still going to have a mummy berry problem. Blueberry bushes in clean areas will without a doubt be the healthiest.

Union and Towns County Extension will be holding a Master Naturalist Class Wednesdays starting July 26th and ending September 20th at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center. This is an eight week course that meets once a week and covers wildlife management, tree and insect ID, invasive species, Georgia natural history, and many other topics. Registration fee is \$250 for the entire eight week course. Please call ASAP to register!

Williams...

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sult in you falling into the depths of misery and despair, depression, hopelessness, to the point where you lash out at society or act irrationally and find yourself at the mercy of the Criminal Justice System, which ought to be renamed *The Criminal System of Vengeance Against Criminals*.

Then maybe you will learn first hand what these broken individuals are suffering and how they arrived at such a hopeless place in their lives.

You or no one is qualified to judge or make personal assessments against these suffering souls. You could very well become one of them in your lifetime.

If you spent more of your time and money on services such as mental health services or other services designed to help people who are troubled, maybe there would be no need for jails.

Sincerely,
Thomas Wayne Williams,
Young Harris

Gray...

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and restore order and peace throughout this land. Awake America in the North Georgia mountains and contiguous states has tripled over the past two years, yet many churches are not yet represented. It is God's will that His people join in unity, and His word says He hears and honors the prayers of the faithful.

This is a call to all who care about our city, county, state and country. Come July 6th at noon to the Awake America gathering at Blairsville City Hall, and encourage your pastor to attend, too. For those who work, it might mean giving up one lunch hour a month, but the benefits far outweigh a quarter-pounder! As God sees the growth and crossing of denominational lines to honor His desire that all be united in seeking Him, we will see blessings pour down and peace restored.

I implore you: Please mark the first Thursday of each month as a priority on your calendar, ask your pastor to come, too, and join other Christians next Thursday, July 6, and every First Thursday thereafter. Attendees in the past have reported they are touched with peace, renewed hope and awareness that the gathering had been an honoring to God.

Respectfully submitted,
Arlene M. Gray

Fowler...

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freedom to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ is at stake, and thus so is the liberty of every American. Human rights and human dignity are temporary abstractions if they are severed from their reality as gifts of the Creator. The eclipse of Christian truth will lead inevitably to a tragic loss of human dignity. If we lose religious liberty, all other liberties will be lost, one by one."

Jesus has given us a freedom politics and law cannot deny. "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8). May God bless America by preserving our liberty to believe and live that.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

and waited for him to go to bed. After Newell went to sleep the boys took apart the old man's buggy and reassembled the buggy on top of the old man's barn. Paul and Bud didn't make it back home until the wee hours of the morning. They slipped into the house and beds with the smug satisfaction of finally getting even with Old Man Newell.

Paul and Bud were awakened the next morning by the familiar booming voice of Old Man Newell screaming out the words, "Your boys put my wagon on top of my barn".

Papa called his sons into the kitchen for breakfast and asked them about

Newell's claims. The boys couldn't lie to their daddy considering the fact that they had not cleaned the wagon grease from their hands from their escapades of the night before.

The boys confessed their crimes to their daddy and explained why they had committed them. Their daddy listened and stated that he understood. However, they were told to go and take the wagon down from the top of the barn. They were also told to go and get the other boys to help the old man.

When the boys drove up the old man began screaming. He stood at the bottom of the barn and watched to make sure the job was done

to his satisfaction.

Tommy Trapp asked the other boys, "How are we going to do this"? The old man screamed, "The same way you got it up there."

So, Tommy shrugged his shoulders and began taking apart the buggy.

He pulled the iron wheel from the axle after the hub was removed and said, "Watch this".

Tommy let go of the wheel right above Old Man Newell and it rolled down the sloped roof of the barn. The wheel came within 6 inches of Old Man Newell's head.

He must've got the message because he left the boys alone to finish the job and Old Man Newell never again screamed at the boys from Trapptown.