

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Always Active

Most people think that the Fire Department's only job is to sit at the station and wait on a fire. However, the Fire Department is responsible for not just responding to emergencies, but preparing for them. There are many duties that must be performed every day to ensure that we are prepared and ready. These duties involve training, maintenance and testing of apparatus and equipment, and of course, we respond to calls.

Responding to emergencies is our main mission. The department is considered an "all-hazards" response department. All-hazards is a fancy way of saying that the fire department responds to just about any emergency imaginable. That includes any type of fire emergency, medical calls, hazardous materials, motor vehicle accidents and many more.

The department must also ensure that all equipment is maintained and tested. Firefighters perform daily, weekly and monthly checks and maintenance on every piece of equipment in our inventory. We perform annual testing of fire engines, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), hydrants and every fire hose to make sure they are in good working order.

When firefighters are not on an emergency or working on equipment, they are active in the community with several prevention programs. We have the Smoke Alarm program that provides free smoke alarms to residents of Union County. Firefighters install these smoke alarms in your home. The department performs pre-incident plans on businesses in the county. These pre-incident plans help the firefighter develop action plans for emergencies in these businesses and enable them to be more aware of the buildings. We also have a Public Education program where we teach students, residents and business owners about fire safety and disaster preparedness.

Union County Fire Department is part of Union County Emergency Management, which is responsible for preparing, mitigating, responding and recovering from disasters or major emergencies that occur in Union County. This involves informing and educating citizens about disasters and preparedness. We also coordinate all the available resources to respond to a disaster. Once the response is completed, we assist with the recovery efforts.

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Psalms

If you're like me, you find yourself in seasons when you can't take the news anymore. Not surprising since the business model of most cable news outlets is to gin up outrage to capture your eyes. Stop warring with news reports and find peace in a place that soothes the heart. I offer you five reasons to meditate on the Psalms.

1. As an aid to worship. Worship isn't just a place, a service or music. It is acknowledging God and His intervention in human affairs. "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name! The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace" (29:2,11). "Praise Him for His mighty deeds; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness" (150:2).

2. When life is not going well. Julie Andrews sang about roses, kittens and mittens, favorite things to remember when the dog bites and the bee stings. But when light thoughts cannot lift the weight of life, the Psalms help you cast your burden on the One who loves you. "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue" (120:2). "Be gracious to me, O God, for man has trampled upon me; fighting all day long he oppresses me. When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You" (56:1,3).

3. If you like poetry. Ancient Hebrew poetry uses parallelism, meaning lines are linked to affirm or oppose each other. "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." (51:2-3). "He supports the fatherless and the widow, but He thwarts the way of the wicked" (146:9). "The wicked borrows and does not pay back, but the righteous is gracious and gives" (37:21).

4. When nature inspires you. Psalm 8 speaks of babies, the moon and stars. It reflects on God's care for humans and human care for animals. It closes with, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!" In another place, "The God of glory thunders, the Lord is over many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful" (29:3-4).

5. To know who Jesus is: "He said to Me, You are my Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

Q. How do I register for the local alert system, Union Alert?

A. Citizens of Union County can register by mailing your phone number, pager number and/or email address, name and address to the Union County Fire Department at 507 Shoe Factory Road, Blairsville, GA 30512, or call 706-439-6091. You can also register via text by sending UCALERT to the number 69310. Once you submit your information, you will receive a confirmation via your choice of notification.

Q. How will I know when a message is from Union Alert?

A. Messages from Union Alert will originate from the following: Voice calls: 706-555-0911; Text Messages: 69310; Emails: unionalert@uniongov.com.

The originating phone numbers should be saved in your phone book as "UC Alert" to be sure you know when the county is trying to contact you. The email address should be saved in your address book so it will not be filtered as spam or junk mail. Voice call Alerts will feature an automated, pre-recorded voice message.

Q. What types of alerts will I receive?

A. You will only receive emergency notifications issued by Union County unless you choose to receive additional alerts. At this time, you can choose to receive weather advisories, city activities, and parks and recreation notifications. Additional options may become available in the future.

Q. Do I have to worry about receiving ads or SPAM if I sign up for this service?

A. Absolutely not. Inspiron Logistics, which is the company behind the Union Alert System, does not allow SPAM text or email messages. The information you provide in order to register will also never be sold to a third party, nor will it be used for anything other than the Union Alert System. It will only be used for emergency notifications.

Q. Do I need to sign up again if I change my mobile carrier?

A. You would only need to sign up again if your phone number is changed. If you receive the notifications via email and

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



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Drug Free Mountain Life

The Link between Drug Abuse and Mental Health

Mental health disorders and substance abuse problems are closely linked illnesses, so intertwined, in fact, that it can be difficult to separate the two issues. It is a problem akin to the classic chicken-and-egg quandary. Which came first – the drug abuse or the poor mental health?

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.

The issue of co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse is one closely followed by the therapeutic medical community. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports that about 8.9 million Americans have both mental health and substance abuse issues.

Some people present a clear progression of problems, but more frequently, these co-occurring conditions developed alongside one another. If a person who has shown signs of

See Drug Free, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Every Vote Counts

Dear Editor,
The midterm elections in November are pivotal not only for our state, but for the whole country. All 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, 35 U.S. Senate seats, 36 governorships, 80 percent of state legislative posts and scores of mayors and judgeships are on the ballot. This year's elections are some of the most important in our lifetime. EVERY vote counts, and together we, the people, can hold politicians accountable. Especially in rural Georgia, our vote could make the difference.

It is important to listen to what the candidates have to say, what they stand for and how they plan to achieve their goals. Then exercise your valuable right to vote and give voice to your choice of how you want your state and community to be governed. What do you want for you and your fellow Georgians and who will best represent your beliefs and values?

Elizabeth Claypool

Final Curtain Call

Dear Editor,
Are you heaven bound? Have you made the decision to follow Jesus Christ, or are you sitting on the fence-line of doubt and confusion? Satan would love nothing better than for you to just keep on living your life to the fullest and grab all the gusto you can out of life. Eat, drink and be merry, for your tomorrow will surely come. What if you were to die today or tonight in your sleep? Where would you be headed? A lot of folks are singing the song "I Did It My Way" by Frank Sinatra. But it's God's way or the highway, folks. Don't let Satan blind you to the only hope that is found only in a Savior that came to save mankind's souls from hell.

When I think of all of the people in his-

See Combs, page 5A

BOLD Infrastructure

Dear Editor,
After suffering with Alzheimer's for over 20 years, my mother, Virginia Mitchell, passed away at the age of 86 on July 26, 2018. As her primary caregiver, it was heartbreaking watching Alzheimer's disease ravage her mind and body. There is currently no cure and no way to delay or prevent Alzheimer's. It is a runaway train heading straight over a cliff.

This summer, I attended the Alzheimer's Impact Movement Forum in Washington D.C. as a volunteer Ambassador to Sen. David Perdue. I would like to see Sen. Perdue join the 50 other Senate co-sponsors of the BOLD Infrastructure

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Letters to the Editor

Another Response to "Interpret"

Dear Editor,
A letter from the Sept. 19 issue astonished me, mainly to the ignorance of the writer. Concerning the appointment of Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court, the writer said: "The Republicans require a justice who will only look at a case in terms of the law, the way it was written." Obviously the writer has no idea that's exactly the job of the Supreme Court: to interpret the law.

What point is the writer trying to illustrate
See Crawford, page 5A

RE: "Intelligent Letters"

Dear Editor,
No other name but Jesus whereby we must be saved. Saved from what? Hell. Jesus spoke more about hell than heaven. If there is no hell, why would he warn people of it, let alone die a brutal death on a cross for those who would believe? Either read his words and believe, or go on your way using the very gifts given to you by him - such as your lungs, brain, stomach, eyes, ears, etc. - spouting off until that day when your time is up and you find yourself in a place Jesus described as weeping, whaling and gnashing of teeth. By the way, if you don't like our religious
See Eckman, page 5A

Festival of Choirs

Dear Editor,
Everyone attending this year's Festival of Choirs hosted by Little Brasstown Baptist Church on Sunday, Sept. 23, enjoyed a fantastic mix of vocal and instrumental talent. Thanks to the North Georgia News, several hundred people learned about our annual interfaith event. We are already looking forward to next year's Festival of Choirs in September.

Susan Evans
Festival Secretary

Trump? Racist?

Dear Editor,
A recent poll showed 49 percent of Americans believe that Trump is a racist. That broke down to 44 percent of white Americans versus 79 percent of black and 58 percent of Hispanic. Why such a big difference, I asked me?

It's not that he hasn't adequately demonstrated sufficient evidence of blatant racism. Like the lawsuit filed by the Department of Justice when he was a 27-year-old president of the Trump Organization for violating the Fair Housing Act, telling the managers of his 40 apartment buildings in New York not to rent to blacks. Like in 1989 taking out \$85,000 in newspaper ads

See Schilling, page 5A

Mr. Newell

Old Man Newell was a little different. Some folks said he was a mite "quare," while others just said he was "turned funny." The bottom line was that he just didn't like young boys for some reason or another. He was always rough talking and short tempered when it came to the boys around Trapptown. No one knows the reason why, but Old Man Newell just didn't trust any of the local boys.

Paul and Bud Cummings grew up during the late 1940s and early 1950s. They ran with the likes of Tommy Trapp, William Shelnett, Jerry Cohen and Hubert Brooks. These boys grew up and did everything together. They had a code and it was enforced. None of the boys ever told on another one of the boys. You might not agree with what one of the boys was doing, but you never told on your buddy.

One day during church, the boys were all sitting together, and Paul (my father) noticed that Tommy Trapp had something in his pockets that was causing them to budge. When asked about the contents of his pockets, Tommy pulled out a big nail and whispered, "I am getting even with Old Man Newell." After church, the gang of boys walked outside to Old Man Newell's log truck. Tommy walked around the front of the log truck and emptied his pockets of the nails. There must've been 2 pounds of 16 penny nails in front of the wheels of that truck.

Paul and his younger brother, Bud, felt sorry for Old Man Newell, so after Tommy and the other boys left, they began trying to kick the nails away from the front of the truck. At this point in time, Old Man Newell came up and thought the boys had placed the nails in front of his wheels. The old man had a fit and screamed out, "You boys are trying to give me a flat tire." Papa ran up to the boys and whipped them in front of the whole crowd. Paul and Bud would not tell on their buddies. So, they took the whipping without a word, but they vowed to take vengeance on Old Man Newell.

Some years later, Old Man Newell's logging truck broke down and the old man was relegated to driving his little buggy back and forth to town. A plan was soon hatched among the boys. One Saturday in the month of June, the boys, including Paul and Bud Cummings, Tommy Trapp, Jerry Cohen, William Shelnett and Hubert Brooks, went out to Old Man Newell's house and waited for him to go to bed. After Newell went to sleep, the boys took apart the old man's buggy and re-assembled the buggy on top of the old man's barn. Paul and Bud didn't make
See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



What is IPM?

Every now and then, I'll write an article entitled "What is..." My goal with these articles will be to further explain a concept or practice that is happening in agriculture. Some of these concepts may be contentious issues. In writing about these things, I won't be saying if I agree with one side or the other, but simply explaining and describing what it is so that people can make educated decisions.

So, IPM. It's a pretty big buzz phrase out there in agriculture right now. It stands for Integrated Pest Management. Integrated means that you employ several different types of strategies. Pest in this case can refer to insects, diseases, weeds, or any other thing out there that you don't want messing with your plants. Management is important. It's not Integrated Pest Eradication. Management means that an acceptable threshold is found for the pest. Depending on what the pest is and what type of damage its doing affects what is an acceptable threshold. For example, the threshold for kudzu growing in a gully or ditch will be much higher than kudzu encroaching on your yard.

Management in IPM comes by a combination of biological, cultural, mechanical and chemical means. By using a combination of these practices, the idea is that pests can be managed to minimize economic, environmental and public health risks. IPM is a long-term management strategy where chemical control is used as a last resort.

Biological control is using natural enemies of a pest for control. Ladybugs are an excellent example because they eat a lot of other insects that feed on garden plants. Another example is that UGA is conducting research on beetles that will control the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid that is ravaging our hemlocks. Cultural controls can include watering practices. A lot of fungal diseases are encouraged by wet conditions. Another example of cultural control is selecting disease resistant varieties to plant. An example of mechanical control is using traps for rodents or other pests to remove them. Mulch to prevent weeds from popping up is another example. Finally, chemical control involves spraying pesticides. When pesticides are applied, they are used only where needed. Selective pesticides that are safest for the surrounding organisms are used.

Prevention of pest problems is a big part of IPM. When IPM is used on a large production scale, quantitative thresholds will be set so that chemical sprays are used only when necessary. Spraying chemicals is not bad or disallowed
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Blairsville - Union County Chamber
President
Steve Rowe



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