

Paris...continued from Page 4A

found in a Georgia stream?

A. From HRWC, "According to The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, if you are a healthy individual with a strong immune system and practice good hygiene and proper wound care, your chances of getting necrotizing fasciitis are extremely low. CDC tracks these types of infections using a special system called Active Bacterial Core surveillance (ABCs), which helps them look for trends in rising cases. CDC reports that every year in the U.S. there are 650-800 cases of necrotizing fasciitis caused by Group A Strep. According to CDC's data, the number of annual infections does not appear to be rising. Odds that you will be struck by lightning during your entire lifetime are greater (1 in 10,000) than contracting necrotizing fasciitis in any one year in the U.S. (1 in 400,000)."

Q. We recently heard a discussion about your Q & A column and about how many people enjoy reading it. How much time does it take and how long have you been writing this column?

A. It takes a lot of time to write this column (a few hours each week) and there is a lot of pressure to meet the deadline, which I have not missed in over 10 years. In fact, I am at the office now at 10 p.m. finishing this column that is due in the morning. This is my third night in a row of being here past 10 p.m.

However, the real purpose of this column is to help fully educate the public about Union County government which I think that is very important.

Q. Have you received feedback on your Q & A column?

A. Yes I have and it has been very positive. Many people over the years have told me they felt like they knew me from reading the Q & A column each week. I have answered over 3,000 questions through the years. It is interesting that one of my detractors has gone back to read older questions in an effort to try to find places where I gave different answers or to twist answers in relation to different topics. I can assure you that when answering the questions, I have tried to do them as accurately and truthfully as possible, but I am certainly capable of making a mistake now and then. There is not another commissioner in Georgia that spends this amount of time each week trying to better inform, educate and communicate with the public through this Q & A process.

If you have enjoyed this column through the years, I would appreciate it if you would let the Editor of the North Georgia News know. Their phone number is 706-745-6343 and their email address is editor@nganews.com and mailing address is P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514. Thank you for your comments.

Leone...continued from Page 4A

ness – featuring Sorghum and Honey. October 20 – Beans and Greens Day. Yes, another opportunity to bring out the kitchen chefs from around the area to compete with their best Greens and Beans recipes, and corn bread competition, too! The HipHop dancers from CenterPointe Studios in Blue Ridge will be making a special appearance and performing that day, as well. We

close the season on October 27 with the Great Butternut Creek Pumpkin Party, with costume parade for kids of all ages and plenty of games, too. The Farmers Market is your Market. Enjoy, compete, volunteer to help. You can email me at UCFarmersMarket@gmail.com with questions about all opportunities at The Market. See you soon!

Cummings...continued from Page 4A

As the years went by the Dahlia became my favorite flower. I came to Union County in 1990 and soon met Marion Todd and Nell Brown. Their father grew Dahlias in Suches and sold them all over the United States. I soon was growing them in my garden. I learned these techniques from Marion and Nell.

Dahlias should be planted in large holes. Lay the tuber on its side and cover it with 4-5 inches of soil and organic matter mix.

The Dahlias will grow 5-6 feet tall and will blow over when the August and September tropical storms come in off the gulf. Stakes should stick out of the ground at least 4 feet. Tie the Dahlias with cloth strips or string. I like to use Velcro tape. Remember to tie the knots loosely to avoid restriction of the plant. Finally, I typically use about 1 pound of 10-10-10

per 100 square feet for Dahlias. The warning you should heed is this; dig up your Dahlias in the late fall if you want to use them again next year.

To me the Dahlias are most beautiful in September when we begin to experience cool nights. An example of this can be found at the Farmers Market. The garden located at the exit of the Farmers Market is full of the most beautiful Dahlias I have seen in a number of years. The garden was worked up and planted by Nell Brown. She is our Union County Dahlia Expert. Nell planted these Dahlias as well as a garden at Meeks Park. I also think she planted a garden at Woody Gap School. So, today I would like to thank Nell for her hard work all across Union County. Nell's efforts in the Dahlia garden bring a lot of joy and beauty to the citizens of Union County.

Garner...continued from Page 4A

to pay a 50% excise tax on the amount that should have been taken out. Please check with a financial planner, tax professional or certified public accountant for more information.

Should you work after retirement? Generally speaking, overstaying your welcome at work could have some serious Social Security, pension, and healthcare ramifications. Would-be retirees frequently fail to consider that staying on the job might bump them into a higher income tax bracket. Additionally, workers should go over their pension plans with a knowledgeable human resource representative or tax advisors to carefully evaluate whether staying on could cost them in

retirement. Last are healthcare options which today seem to be like a moving target. You ultimately decide how much you can afford. The option to step out of the workforce is to weigh the trade-offs of taxes, pensions, and 401 (K) or IRA benefits against the benefit of an extra year of income.

To close, operating a small business can be a huge challenge. Financial security and risk reduction methods are most sensitive when nearing retirement. To ask questions about small business support, please call the Chamber at (706) 745-5789 or go to www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com. I may be reached anytime at Chair@Blairsville-Chamber.com.

Turner...continued from Page 4A

displace the authority of our locally elected school boards, those most accountable to the taxpayers and communities in which they serve. We will not and cannot support any efforts to further erode and undermine our public schools of needed funds and support.

Proponents of this ill-conceived legislation are in essence abandoning Georgia's public schools, families and children. These efforts are a disservice to all of Georgia's children and an ill financed campaign to mislead the taxpayers and citizens of Georgia. Energy and resources would best be used to improve our public schools for the welfare of Georgians and our future.

While Georgia's population has grown by 20 percent over the past 10 years, our schools have had to produce more with less. It is un-

fortunate that some Georgia lawmakers and special interest groups have blatantly ignored effective methods, interventions and educational strategies. Over the past 6 years, this state has sabotaged its own schools by shortchanging them over \$5 billion while simultaneously awarding over \$6 billion in special interest tax cuts!

Successful schools and school districts present a wide and varied curricula, conditions that support the best workforce of teachers, community partnerships, support services, parental engagement and true collaboration between policymakers and those who service our children on a daily basis, the classroom teachers.

Verdaillia Turner

Georgia Federation of Teachers

King

...continued from Page 4A

Now, as director of Healing Hands Community Clinic, a non-profit organization that provides free healthcare to the uninsured of the area, I can truly say, being involved is one of the greatest blessings I have ever received. I not only have the privilege of serving my brothers and sisters who are in need, I am allowed the opportunity to serve in the mission field alongside the greatest group of volunteers that any charity could ask for.

In our area there are a great many people who are experiencing hard times and could use a little help; by help I don't necessarily mean money. It could be that they just need someone to talk to, help them do a few things around the house or just a ride to the store. Simple things that require only a giving spirit and time. It could be that they just need to see your smiling face when they walk into one of the many worthwhile charities in the area. Get involved, give of yourself, volunteer!

We would love to have you at Healing Hands, we are always in need of providers, nurses and those who have no medical experience whatsoever! But I would encourage you to pray and get a feel for where God can use you best. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Healing Hands Community Clinic volunteer family, contact Sandy Sharrock at sandy-sharrock@windstream.net/
Jeri Ann King

Sullivan

...continued from Page 4A

The term "legitimate" rape is used to mean "forcible" or stranger rape. The FBI has recently updated its definition of rape from the 1920s definition "The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will" to sexual contact with any victim without consent. This more accurately encompasses the wider scope of sexual violence on children of both sexes, males, transgendered, the elderly and disabled as well as women.

Victims of any type of rape are very likely to disagree that theirs is not a "legitimate" rape. Rape Trauma Syndrome and PTSD are found in all types of victims of sexual assault: child molestation, incest, drug-facilitated, acquaintance, spousal, military, gang, etc. These victims suffer enormous emotional pain, even if force is not used and the rapist is known to the victim (80 percent of rapes). And in rural areas such as ours it is even more likely the assailant will be known to the victim. Consider this. Just because you eat dinner with a person, or hire them to mow your lawn or have a couple drinks with them or even have a high school crush on them, does that mean you are giving consent to sex? Of course not.

Can victims of rape get pregnant? Yes. Even violent, near-death rapes? Yes. The reproductive system of a rape victim does NOT "shut down." The American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology estimates that women of child-bearing age have a 5 percent chance of pregnancy per episode of rape. The standard of care is to offer pregnancy prevention to victims of sexual assault. Even the Catholic church, one of the most conservative religions, has a "Compassionate Care" directive for victims of sexual assault and emergency contraception. Emergency contraception (Plan B, Ella), also known as the "morning after pill," consists of a high dose birth control pill(s) and is available over the counter to women over 17 years old. WHO reports that EC does not interrupt an existing pregnancy nor affect a developing fetus, thus it is NOT an abortion pill. RU-486 is the abortion pill and it is not administered to PREVENT pregnancy.

Victim of rape? Please contact the rape crisis network, law enforcement or go to your closest emergency department. The sexual assault response team is designed to prevent further trauma from your sexual assault - dispatching a specially trained advocate, follow-up care and referrals, and options of medications for STDs and pregnancy prevention (the sooner, the better). Estimates are only 20-50 percent of rape victims report their assault. Rapists tend to have many victims; you can help break the cycle.

Questions or need a speaker? Please contact your nearest rape crisis center or GNEA (the GA. Network to End Sexual Assault) for accurate information.

Pam Sullivan,

RN, BSN,
SANE-A Fannin County

Parris...continued from Page 4A

I have heard of people who were afraid of their own shadow. That may have something to do with the kind of shadow we cast. It is beyond any shadow of doubt that our entire nation is casting some scary and grotesque shadows.

When Hezekiah, King

of Judah, was sick unto death, Isaiah the prophet gave him a sign that God would heal him by letting the shadow return backward ten degrees on the sundial (II Kings 20:8-11). Spiritually, we need to turn back the shadow on the spiritual Sundial. The Psalmist

said, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1).

The shadows of evening are falling. God help us to number our days. Inscribed on a sundial are these words: "I am a shadow so are thou, I mark time, doest thou?"