

Emergency Medical Responses

Union County firefighters perform many duties to help protect the citizens of Union County. One of the duties is to respond to medical calls. Medical calls make up over 65% of the department's responses.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief David Dyer



Firefighters of Union County Fire Department are trained to respond to these medical calls. The levels of training start at the basic level of Emergency Medical Responder and go up to Paramedic.

Firefighters may be trained to the minimum basic level of Emergency Medical Responder (EMR). The EMR class involves approximately 80 hours of medical training.

Volunteer Emergency Medical Responders are dispatched to every medical call. Additionally, the career firefighters respond to all major trauma or medical calls.

Emergency medical response is just one of the many duties and services that the firefighters of Union County Fire Department perform.

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The Forgive

Rachael Denhollander had her day in court. She spoke not only to the doctor, Larry Nassar who abused over 150 young gymnasts in his care, but also to the judge, other victims, and to all of us.

Her most quoted statement to Nassar is, "I pray you experience the soul-crushing weight of guilt so you may someday experience true repentance and true forgiveness from God, which you need far more than forgiveness from me - though I extend that to you as well."

All Things New Wayne Fowler



One might ask, if she is willing to forgive him, why ask the judge to throw the book at Nassar? In short, because forgiveness does not mean there are no consequences.

Denhollander argued that the victims have value. For the judge to let Nassar go would be tantamount to declaring that his crimes didn't matter, nor did the young gymnasts' shattered lives.

This illuminates the Christian message of substitutionary atonement, i.e. Jesus dying on the cross for your sins. The question is, if God wanted to forgive, why didn't he just do it without that bloody execution 2000 years ago?

Enter Jesus. As the only mediator between God and people, He "gave Himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:5-6) to release you from the penalty of sin.

The forgiven becomes the forgiver in God's trickle down

See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

Q. What is ESPLOST?

A. It stands for Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. It is one of the seven pennies in sales tax you already pay for every dollar you spend in Union County.

Q. Is ESPLOST the same thing as SPLOST?

A. These are exactly the same thing except ESPLOST is strictly for education purposes. The Board of Education makes all the decisions regarding what projects will be completed utilizing ESPLOST, not the county government.

Q & A from Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris



Q. How do we select to have a SPLOST or ESPLOST?

A. They are both decided on by the voters of Union County by a referendum being placed on the ballot.

Q. When does the election happen for them?

A. ESPLOST will be voted on by the public at the primary election on May 22, 2018. SPLOST will either be voted on at the general election in November or sometime next year.

Q. How often do we vote on these sales taxes?

A. The county SPLOST sales tax lasts for six years when the city is included to receive a portion of the funds. The school ESPLOST sales tax collection period lasts for 5 years.

Q. Will voting for these two issues raise our sales tax?

A. No. You are already paying the one penny for SPLOST and the one penny for ESPLOST out of the 7% sales tax we currently have.

Q. Why do we have to vote on this every few years instead of it being permanent.

A. The Georgia Legislature wanted to be sure that counties and school systems properly use the money. If we do not use the money like the public thinks is proper, then they may vote against it when it comes up for a vote again.

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Drug Free Mountain Life

The Teen Vaping Trend

With the recent Monitoring the Future Study release indicating that nearly one in three high school seniors reported using a vaping device in the past year, it's imperative that parents are informed of the potential dangers that can result from vaping.

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.

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol, often referred to as vapor, produced by an e-cigarette or similar device. It's become more popular among teens than regular cigarettes, especially given that vaping devices can be used for anything from flavors like mango, mint or tutti frutti, to flavorings containing nicotine or THC.

Below are three major ones for parents to be concerned about:

See Drug Free, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Awake America

I would like to encourage everyone that lives in the Blairsville area to come to City Hall for the Awake America prayer meeting every first Thursday of the month at 11:59.

If you need any more information you can go to Lydia's website awakeamerica.info and see more of her amazing work she has done, not only for the Blairsville area, but the surrounding areas as well.

Frank F. Combs

Sadly too true...

An obituary printed in the London Times... Absolutely Dead Brilliant!

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

Knowing when to come in out of the rain; Why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair; And, maybe it was my fault.

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6 year old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

See Little, page 5A

How to Fund Wildfire Response

Western lawmakers are pushing for Congress to address funding and management challenges at the U.S. Forest Service as the government struggles to respond to an extreme year for wildfires. Democrats and Republicans representing states affected by wildfires say the problem demands the same attention as recent hurricanes, as fires have become larger, more frequent, deadlier, and costlier, forcing the Forest Service to borrow from other government accounts when money runs out.

RC&D Executive Director Frank Riley



"By returning responsible management practices to our forests, we will improve forest health, reduce escalating suppression costs, and lower the risk of catastrophic wildfire threatening communities and the environment", says Rep. Rob Bishop, Chairman of the House Natural Resource Committee.

But this year's fires are different, and more urgent, because fires are increasingly burning close to homes and people as the West becomes more populated. From California to Utah and Montana, thousands of people have been forced to evacuate their homes this fire season.

Experts say that the human element is one of a confluence of factors that have increased the cost of firefighting response. In the past, everybody thought fire was a bad thing, so they put out all these small fires, which built up fuel levels in forests.

See Riley, page 5A

Mamma's Trip to Town

My mother was looking forward to her first trip to town. She was nearly 8 years old and had never been to town; at least she couldn't remember when she had been to town. Anyway, her grandparents, Dad (Charlie) and Mommie (Alvie Baker) were going to Russellville on Saturday.

Around The Farm Mickey Cummings



That hot July day began early in the morning. Mother said it took nearly an hour to make the trip. Mom said she sat in the middle and watched her grandfather change the gears as they drove down the road.

The old Roxy Theater was located just down the street and I can remember going in there and watching Gary Cooper in an old western movie." Mom remembered going to the diner and eating lunch.

Just before lunch Mom and her grandparents saw the Dubois ladies in the Five and Dime Store. Minnie, the mother, Petunia and Bessie are the same group that shot at my great Uncle Pick because he brought them some food which they consumed quickly and they became extremely sick.

Aunt Minnie was the smallest of the three rather large ladies. And that is putting it kindly. Pearl and Petunia were twice the size of Minnie. However, all 3 ladies were friendly and had the most beautiful clothes. But, sometime they could

See Cummings, page 5A

Drugs Don't Work Program

In 2018 the Chamber is focusing on making certain that our current members and prospective members understand and utilize the full scope of benefits available to them. One of the most overlooked benefits is participation in "Drugs Don't Work".

Blairsville - Union County Chamber Interim President Al Harper



By participating, members will work with our local Drugs Don't Work coordinator, Dawn Saraney, to put together a substance abuse policy that meets state compliance guidelines.

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Bluebirds

Once referred to as "blue robins" because of their vibrant blue hue and rust colored chest, bluebirds are a desired addition to any homeowner's backyard. Because of numerous challenges, most importantly loss of habitat, these charismatic little birds have been facing a population decline.

From the Ground Up Melissa Mattee



Bluebirds eat insects such as grasshoppers, crickets and caterpillars, as well as berries during the colder months when insects are not as abundant. They are also cavity dwellers, meaning they normally nest in tree holes.

When building the house, use untreated wood that is about one inch thick. Pine, cedar, and cypress are all good choices. If you would like to paint the house, choose a light color as it will reflect the sunlight and prevent the shelter from becoming too hot.

After the house is built, it is important to choose an appropriate place to install it. It is always best to put bluebird houses on their own separate pole with a conical shield on it to minimize the chances of a predator such as a snake climbing the post.

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