

Mila Rose...from Page 1A

Powell began coaching up the young father while administering a crash-course in childbirth. Once they'd pulled over, Powell asked Phelan to tell her what he could see.

"The feet are hanging out," Phelan answered, barely audible over Huskins' pain-riddled screams.

"I have help coming to you," Powell told the nervous father in her natural, calming tone. "Lay her seat back as far

as it will go. Try to keep her calm; just let her breathe in and out real slow. I know this is a tough situation."

Seconds later, a father's worst fear turned to his greatest joy when he shouted, "She's in my hands; I have a beautiful newborn baby."

It was almost as if little Mila Rose could hear the conversation, because just as Powell asked if the child was breathing, Mila began to cry,

filling her lungs for the very first time with air.

"Do you have something you can wrap her up in? Maybe you can take your shirt off," Powell suggested. "Make sure she doesn't have anything in her mouth, leave the cord (alone) and just let her cry. You can rub her chest if you want."

After checking on Huskins' condition, Powell reminded the dad to be careful with the umbilical cord, and that's when he revealed another startling revelation.

"The cord was around

her neck when she came out, but we got it undone – she's doing OK," Phelan said in a still-shaky voice. "She pooped some black stuff when she came out."

"That's just a little meconium," Powell replied calmly. "You're doing a great job. It sounds like she's doing okay. She's crying and that's good."

As Powell continued with small talk to calm the anxious parents, ambulance sirens began growing louder in the background. That's when Powell quietly let out another sigh of relief before providing one final direction.

"Don't move," she said. "Let them come to you."

Looking back almost three weeks removed from that evening on the highway, Phelan described the most nerve-racking moment surrounding Mila's birth.

"As she was being born, she stopped at her head, and her feet literally started to turn blue," he said. "Then she pooped, and after that, she finished coming out and coughed up the fluid. Then I snatched her up and pulled the umbilical cord out from around her neck."

"At that time, she took a deep breath and opened her

eyes. Then she looked at me, grabbed my finger and just stole my heart. Hearing her cry was the best moment of my life, which came right after the worst moment – holding her in my arms and watching her turn blue, knowing there was nothing I could do."

According to Powell, it's not often that calls stick with her the way this one has. She even admits that she called the hospital out of concern for Mila and her parents.

"I have a daughter who works at the hospital, but they still couldn't tell me anything except that the baby was OK. But that was all I needed to know," Powell said.

After two weeks of reflecting on the just over 8-minute emergency call, Powell said that these types of moments make all the training worthwhile and leave her feeling confident she has chosen a fitting career path.

"You like these calls," she said. "These are the good calls, and it feels nice to get them, because you also get some bad calls. You just try to remember the good calls and just let the bad ones sink to the bottom."

Added Powell, praising her dispatch partner, "I also talk with Kasey a lot about those

types of moments. I may have more experience, but we're still a team. She brings things to the table, and I bring things to the table."

"It's good to have someone you can trust as a teammate, because sometimes I spend more time with her than my own family."

Since Mila's birth, Powell has not spoken with Huskins or Phelan, but the proud parents have a message for the dispatcher who helped save their daughter's life.

"We would like to thank her, and I really appreciate her walking me through it," Phelan said. "I couldn't have done it without her. I didn't do anything. It was all her."

He also wanted to thank the Blairsville community for all of its hospitality, saying his time here was something his family would always cherish.

"I'm grateful for everyone: the dispatcher, the paramedics, the Fire Department, the hospital, the nurses, and everyone that had a hand in it," he said. "We're thankful for everyone in Blairsville. We were just visitors, but we were treated immaculately. I could go on and on about how great everyone was."

County Meeting...from Page 1A

a mutual aid agreement similar to what we have with adjacent fire departments and municipalities," Paris said.

Next up, Paris accepted a contract with Freeman Gas for propane services in the amount of 89 cents per gallon, to be in effect from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

Moving on, he accepted another contract with Teague Nall and Perkins Inc. to provide engineering services "on an as-needed basis and billed monthly."

"This company, locally managed by Wayne Fowler, is an engineering company and is consulting with the county Road Department on a watershed drainage project," Paris said.

Patrons of Meeks Park will be glad to see another public art piece by local sculptor Al Garnto, with whom Paris has contracted "to design, construct and erect a floral-themed sculpture in full color to be located at the new pavilion in Meeks Park."

The total cost will not exceed \$3,500 for this sculpture, and Paris said there were plans for Garnto to work with the architect of the new Double Gym that's still under construction for a sculpture there.

Paris also announced a \$16,200 agreement with Engineering Management Inc. for design work on a wastewater pump station for a new restroom facility in Meeks Park.

"This new restroom facility will be mostly funded by TVA and Meeks Park," Paris said. "As you know, our long-range plan – we hope in two to three years – is for an amphitheater in Meeks Park. We've been working with TVA for several years on trying to design and locate a restroom, because all this is in the TVA floodplain."

The commissioner then accepted a \$1,500 agreement with AT&T Georgia for adding "additional rate elements" for equipment and software to accommodate an upcoming new feature at the Union County E-911 Center to "enhance our existing E911 system, which benefits everybody in the county."

Next, Paris accepted a \$4,000 employee safety grant from the Association County Commissioners of Georgia via the Group Self-Insurance Workers' Compensation Fund to be used "to purchase additional safety equipment for the Union County Fire Department," including gloves, boots, hoods and helmets.

He also extended the "Emergency Moratorium on Applications for Multi-Family Unit Developments" that was enacted on Aug. 6, 2019. The moratorium has been extended for up to 190 days from April 2.

"The county is still in the process of re-writing our guidelines for multifamily and multistory housing units," Paris said. "We did a moratorium to prevent additional units from being built until we had time to study and see what we could do to make sure our regulations would catch up, and we're still in the process of working that out."

"In fact, we've gone through two of these (moratoriums) trying to get ready, but it's difficult and a lot to do, so we hope we'll get this done this time."

In his Commissioner's Comments, Paris said it had

been "a hectic time" for the county during the pandemic, as he and his staff continue to work to open county facilities and recreational opportunities.

"We've taken things kind of slow – and still are, to some people's idea," Paris said. "I guess everything is now functioning except for the swimming pool and the splash pad, and we are watching things at the courthouse. Our (local COVID) cases have continued

to increase, but gradually and slowly."

As far as county projects, Paris said the pavilion at Meeks Park was "pretty much done," and there's a little bit of work left at the off-leash dog park, which will feature special canine obstacles.

The pickleball courts behind the Health Department are completed and in use, and the Double Gym should be finished in a couple of months.

Union County Historical Society announces new Corporate Member



Judy Carpenter and Jeremy McDonald

McDonald Flooring LLC is the newest corporate member of the Union County Historical Society. Judy Carpenter, President, presented a framed picture of the Historical Society Courthouse Museum to Jeremy McDonald, owner of McDonald Flooring LLC, serving Blairsville and surrounding counties.

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