

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Danger Will Robinson

I know there are folks out there that like to dabble with the recreational use of illegal drugs.

I know that comes as a shock, considering 37 people were busted here last week for partaking in the illegal drug trade.

Well, I just got a release from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation warning Georgians that there are some illegal drugs out there on the street that can kill just by touching them with one finger.

The GBI Crime Lab in Cleveland has identified two new fentanyl analogues, acrylfentanyl and tetrahydrofuran fentanyl.

The GBI Crime Lab had not previously identified both of these synthetic opioids. They both can be absorbed through the skin and are considered highly dangerous.

The research of these dangerous opioids began when the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office submitted forensic drug evidence containing these two drugs to the crime lab in March of this year.

Acrylfentanyl had been on the GBI's watch list for the past few months. Multiple reports in other states indicated that the opioid reversal drug, naloxone, may not be effective if someone overdosed after ingesting acrylfentanyl.

Legislation was introduced this year to outlaw acrylfentanyl in Georgia. The law banning the substance went into effect after passage by the Georgia General Assembly and the Governor's signature on April 17, 2017. At this time, tetrahydrofuran fentanyl is not covered under Georgia law.

It is unknown how the human body will react to both drugs since they are not intended for human or veterinary use.

Not intended for human or veterinary use is the key phrase here folks. Believe me, there are some young folks - and older folks that would experiment with these drugs.

For those who do use, smoke your pot, or drink your beer, but stay the heck away from opioids. They may look legit, but trust me, at least four people in Georgia are dead because of these drugs. A fifth person has recovered from just touching the drugs.

As state and local law enforcement track down the source of these drugs, just remember that it only takes one time taking the wrong stuff to kill you.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Origin and Destiny

I learned how to make canned preserves. This new kitchen hobby was prompted by a harvest of strawberries, caused by a decision last year to plant, because I inherited an interest in growing food from my farmer Dad, who was also raised on a farm. And the causes march resolutely backward in time. Everything has a cause, a series of causes, and ultimately a first cause, if you think about it. The first domino has to be pushed over.

Philosophers have dissected this idea for ages. If the origin of the universe is uncaused then a Creator is not needed. If there is a First Cause, who is it, and what are the implications for our destiny?

William Lane Craig is a Christian philosopher who expounds on the cosmological argument for the existence of God. The syllogism is stated thus: If the universe began to exist, then the universe has a cause of its beginning; the Universe began to exist; therefore the universe has a cause of its existence. Craig adds to the conclusion saying, "If the universe has a cause, then an uncaused personal Creator of the universe exists, who without the universe is beginningless, changeless, immaterial, timeless, spaceless and enormously powerful."

Only a force outside of the universe could be the First Cause. The ancient Hebrews came to know this First Cause as YHWH, the timeless and uncaused God of the Bible who spoke the world into existence ex nihilo, or "out of nothing." It is not irrational that "by faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible" (Heb. 11:3).

Francis Schaeffer describes the Trinity's existence before creation. "Prior to the material universe, prior to the creation of all else, there is love and communication. And hence, when modern man screams for love and communication (as he so frequently does), Christians have an answer: There is value to love and value to communication because it is rooted into what intrinsically always has been." Our desire for love and communication is evidence we are created in God's image, and meant for an eternal relationship with Him.

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. What is the purpose of the new Fire Department electronic sign at the intersection of 19/129 South and the Glenn Gooch Bypass?

A. The sign's purpose is to be able to quickly notify the public of any public safety issues regarding wild fires, hazmat or any other community emergency. During the wild fire scare last year, we realized we did not have a method to notify all the public unless it was over the Internet or phones. In fact, the county had to purchase two GDOT highway lighted signs just to get the message out about the county wide burn ban. We realized that people camping, visiting in rental cabins, or those local who never read the newspaper or have computer access, had no way to know we were under a burn ban, other than signage. The hope is that this will be a good public safety measure for the future.

Q. How much did this sign cost?

A. The Fire Department received a 100 percent grant in the amount of \$16,000. There was no cost to the county for this other than installation cost, power and Internet. It will be a great message system for the community. The signs are Internet-based, so the message can be changed instantly from the Fire Department Office. We are hopeful this grant opportunity will occur again in the future and we will be able to get another sign for a different location near Highway 515.

Q. In last week's NGN, someone again responded with a negative letter regarding the jail and the fact that the letter writer felt like the commissioner was being disrespectful in speaking of the inmates sleeping on the floor as being their own fault.

A. As is the case with most negative letters, if the newspaper would ask the people if they had spoken with me first, it would save a lot of problems, as they might more fully understand the issue and my statement. I would welcome the author to come by my office for a visit.

Our inmates do not sleep on the hard floor at the jail. They sometimes have to sleep on a small bunk bed with mattress that

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Anti-Drug Coalition

UC Anti-Drug Coalition Offers Free Teen Drug Screening

From now until school starts back August 4th, parents can get their middle and high school age children drug screened at no cost, courtesy of the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition.

The Coalition has partnered with two facilities in Blairsville, New Hope Counseling and Alpha Drug Testing Services, to perform the drug screens.

Parents can call New Hope Counseling at (706) 745-4066 to schedule a testing appointment for Wednesdays. Alpha Drug Testing Services can be reached at (866) 588-7878 to schedule testing appointments on Tuesdays.

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The mission of the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition is to support an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse. Visit and Like our Facebook page for additional articles and videos.



RC&D

Last week I attended the National Partnership Leadership Symposium in Lincoln, NE where current and future leaders of various national agriculture organizations gathered to meet, tell tales, and discuss their plans for the future, although some of us had less future to plan for than others, but we Baby Boomers have to keep moving or some millennial will run over us.

One of the speakers talked about the various generations that we have now: the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers (yeah us!), millennials, Gen X, Gen Y and I forget the others. Sometimes communication between these generations is difficult because we all go about accomplishing our goals very differently. We learned that we Baby boomers are doers, and millennials like to plan and discuss.

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RC&D Executive Director
Frank Riley

UCFD Grants

The department is constantly applying for grants that will help the department. Every dollar that we receive from a grant is a dollar that we save the taxpayers. We have applied for and received several grants this year.

We received grants from USFS to purchase an electronic sign for Firewise information; from GEMA/Homeland Security to purchase Community Emergency Response Team equipment; and from Home Depot to purchase smoke alarms.

We also received the Chesney Fallen Firefighters Memorial Grant from Georgia Firefighter Burn Foundation to purchase public education materials.

The main grant that we received was the Assistance to Firefighters Grant from FEMA. This grant programs started after the 9/11 attacks and assists fire departments. We applied for and received a grant for three specialized turnout gear washer/extractors and dryers for the department.

The grant total is \$58,180. The grant is a matching grant where the county has to provide 10% of the funds and FEMA provides 90%. The washers/extractors and dryers will be placed in three stations of the department. The project is in the planning stages and should be completed in May of 2018.

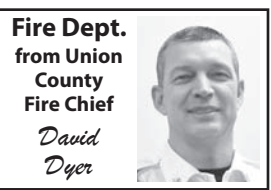
The main question is how does this help the firefighters, the department and the citizens of Union County. The turnout gear is the protective clothing that firefighters wear. It is worn on fires, car accidents and other incidents. The washer/extractors are special washing machines that not only clean turnout gear but extract all the harmful contaminants that can get embed in the turnout gear from a fire. These contaminants have been linked to several diseases including cancer. Cleaning the turnout gear with these machines removes these contaminants and promotes safety for firefighters.

The department and the citizens benefit from these machines because clean turnout gear lasts longer. Turnout gear is expensive.

A full set of turnout gear, without the Self-contained Breathing apparatus, can cost \$2,500 per firefighter. Cleaning the turnout gear with these machines will increase the life of the gear and reduce replacement costs.

Grants are an important part of our department. We will continue to seek and apply for grants that will benefit our department and help enable us to better serve our community.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~



Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer

Leman

Leman was an old vegetable grower from over in the mountains of north Alabama.

Leman never had much in life except for his family and his land. Leman grew tomatoes, beans and other vegetables. He sold them in front of the courthouse in Russellville.

Leman never married. He was just too busy taking care of his elderly mother, Jesse.

Jesse was very healthy and lived to a ripe old age of 99. But, as she aged she became frail and Leman had to stay close to home to care for her. Jesse never saw the inside of a nursing home or experienced the help of a home nurse. That was in the days before any home health services.

Leman was a man of very few hobbies. He just didn't have the time. But, one of the things Leman could do was dream. So, after a long day in the fields Leman would pick up his favorite magazine to read, *National Geographic*.

Leman would read about all the wonderful places he would like to visit. Places like Borneo, Brazil, Congo, Antarctica, and China.

When he was reading about *National Geographic*, Leman would read about Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.

Leman could imagine himself floating on a raft from Alabama all the way to the Mississippi and down to New Orleans. He could just imagine catching catfish and cooking them over a fresh fire while watching the sunset from an island on the river.

Leman thought and dreamed about this for years and decided he would build a raft and float to New Orleans.

Then he would walk around the French Quarter and eat some good Cajun Food. When he got tired he would catch a ride on a barge back up to Memphis. He figured he could walk home from Memphis in a week.

Leman thought about the process for a while and decided to leave in August after his crops were all harvested. He just knew he could be back home before spring planting.

Leman made all the arrangements. First, he called his sister down in Birmingham and asked her to look after their aging mother. She agreed and wished Leman a safe trip.

Next Leman began to build his raft. Leman said, "I feel just like Noah except I am not preaching to the lost."

The raft was 20 feet long and 10 feet wide. Leman strapped some old whiskey barrels to the bottom of the raft to give it buoyancy. He built a little hut on the raft to protect him from storms. A stove was placed in the center of the raft to

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings

Black rot

Whether they're for a tasty snack on a hot summer day or making some wine to enjoy with dinner, grapes are a great crop to grow in our North Georgia environment.

However, many grape crops are susceptible to a serious disease known as black rot. Though black rot can severely damage a crop, once you know you have it, it can easily be managed in future seasons.

Black rot is caused by the fungus Guignardia bidwellii. It can affect every part of the vine above ground: leaves, tendrils, canes, shoots and flowers. Crop loss occurs when berries become infected, rot and drop off prematurely. Leaf spots will typically occur one week after infections. The spots are tan and round, and they often have a reddish-brown border. Just like with Septoria leaf spot that I mentioned in tomatoes a few weeks ago, small black fruiting bodies called pycnidia appear on the grape leaf spots. The spores in these pycnidia will infect new tissue, eventually causing black, sunken lesions on stems. Eventually, berries will develop light brown spots that will rapidly enlarge and cause them to shrivel into wrinkled black "mummies."

After harvest, the disease overwinters in these mummified berries, old vine wood and stem lesions that remain on the plant.

Once the first warm spring come the next year, the spores germinate and infect new tissues and the fungus once again establishes on the plant. Berry infections start when the grapes are in bloom and continue until the start of ripening. Ripe grapes are not vulnerable to infection because of their increased sugar content. Because of this, disease spread usually stops in late summer.

Though tissue that becomes infected with black rot will remain infected throughout later seasons, there are ways to manage the spread of the disease and maintain good crop yields on infected vines. Make sure to promote fast-drying of your planting because increased moisture in your canopy can encourage black rot infections. You can do this by ensuring proper vine spacing, selecting well-drained planting sites and proper pruning techniques. Always remove and destroy infected tissue and mummified berries and other tissue that have dropped on the ground. If you have trouble managing black rot, avoid cultivars such as Concord, Reliance, Niagra and Catawba which are all susceptible. Fredonia and Delaware are both resistant, as are many other varieties depending on how well they are maintained. Finally, if you have an established infection, pro-

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From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor, Finally!

Finally! I saw a Union County Sheriff's Deputy with someone pulled over on (Georgia) 515. ME!

Ain't that a hoot? But not for speeding! For expired tag. I had the 2018 sticker on my tag and a 2018 registration.

So what's the problem? The sticker was for the plate on my trailer. You guessed it; I switched the stickers.

What a relief. If I was speeding, I'd have to move out of the county after my comments about "speeders."

Incidentally, I was surprised that some readers actually defended the speeders and vilified anyone that complained about speeders.

Guess it's true: "You can please some of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time." LOL

Jerry Driskell

A Free Nation

Dear Editor,

During the last century, many in the cultural and political elite have favored socialism, a political and economic doctrine contrary to the political beliefs of our Founding Fathers.

With this powerful liberal elite pushing for government control over every area of our lives, for more than 100 years, how have we managed to retain so many of our freedoms... and even exercise the almost lost freedom to homeschool?

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