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A. If you need a certified copy of a Birth Certificate, Death Certificate, or Marriage License (all referred to as Vital Records), this can all be obtained through the Probate Court since this office maintains and records all vital records for Union County. You can request them in person or through the mail. The first copy is \$25 and each additional copy of the same record is \$5.

Q. If I was born in a state other than Georgia, can the Union County Probate Court provide me with a copy of my Birth Certificate?

A. No, they cannot. The Union County Probate Court only has access to Vital Records for births and deaths that occur in the State of Georgia. If you were born in another state, you would want to visit the website <https://www.cdc.nchs/w2w/index.htm>. This website provides you with the office in each state where you can request a copy of a vital record.

Marriage records are available county by county only.

Q. What other things does the Probate Court handle in their office?

A. If you receive a ticket in Union County that is not within the Blairsville City limits, you would pay your ticket in the Probate Court Office or appear in court if there is a mandatory court appearance based on the type of violation. This court also handles any fish and game violations and citations that are issued. Court is held monthly, so you should contact the Probate Court's Office with questions regarding your violation and court appearances within a timely manner. This office also handles estates, guardianships of minors and adults, mental health issues, fireworks display permits, houses copies of the legal organ of Union County, and many other miscellaneous duties such as certificates of residency and cattle brand registrations.

Cummings ... continued from Page 4A

The two cotton-headed boys raced the 1/4 mile or so across the field to their mailbox.

As Paul was reaching into the box, he noticed some green paper on the ground at his feet. He reached down and picked up the paper. As he unfolded the crumpled up paper, he almost gagged. It was covered in wet snuff, and immediately, Dad and Bud knew it came from Judd. The boys almost threw it away, but something told them to continue unfolding the paper. The boys were 10 and 8 and had never seen a \$20 bill. Carefully, they cleaned the money with water to remove the snuff and laid it out to dry.

The two boys decided to keep the money for themselves and were already planning all they would buy. The family spent the rest of the hot day in the cotton patch chopping out the cotton, and late in the day, they looked up and watched as the mailman's car came down the old road to their house. Glenna and her sons left Papa in the field and walked back across to the cool shade of the big oaks in their yard. Judd was waiting on them and greeted them all with a big smile. He explained that he had a habit of wiping his mouth with paper and that he thought he'd accidentally wiped off the snuff with a \$20 bill and threw it out the window of the Model T. And he asked, "I don't guess y'ins have seen it, have ye?"

Granny explained that they had not seen the money, and sadly, Judd drove away.

Papa walked up and Granny explained the situation to him. Papa could always read his boys like a book, and when Granny walked toward the house to prepare supper, he asked his sons, "Have you two seen Judd's money?" The two little boys hung their heads and explained to their father what had happened. Papa grinned and talked to them about honesty. Then he asked if they wanted to have some fun. He then suggested a plan of action.

After a bit, Paul went to the kitchen and asked his Momma for a hug. As she was hugging her eldest son, Papa and Bud watched Paul slip the \$20 bill into the pocket of his mother's apron. They all sat around the table talking, and Papa asked, "Glenna, do you think that just maybe you might have found that money and picked it up, and we've been so busy you forgot about it?" Her face flashed with anger and she started to say no. She slipped her hand into her apron pocket, finding the money and slowly pulling it out.

That evening, they drove out to Judd's house and explained that she had found his money. It wasn't until years later when they told Granny the truth. She thought all along she'd found the money and forgot it.

Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

ing impact on U.S. businesses.

There is no doubt that the opioid epidemic has become America's most serious public health crisis. At a time in U.S. history when death rates for the leading causes of death - such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes - are dropping, it is shocking that our society would allow the opioid epidemic to continue taking so many lives.

Narcotic painkiller use has become widespread in the U.S., and millions of Americans are addicted. The addictive potential of opioid-based pills is extremely high, and illegal opioids are cheap and easy to obtain. It is predicted that more than 325,000 Americans will die by overdose over the next five years.

More than 25 percent of job applicants nationwide fail pre-employment drug tests, and more than two million working-age men that are unemployed are addicted to opioid-based painkillers and are no longer even looking for work.

One of the industries hit hardest by the opioid epidemic is the construction industry. Today, there are more unfilled jobs in the construction sector than there were in 2007, right before the economic crash. The number of open construction jobs in August of 2017 reached almost 250,000. This is an almost 35 percent increase over the past year.

The manufacturing, food service, entertainment, hospitality, and transportation industries have also been hit hard. Several manufacturing companies in Georgia are experiencing as many as 40 percent of applicants failing a pre-employment drug test, and federal drug test positives among transportation workers in the U.S. have soared. The opioid epidemic is costing American businesses in many more ways.

Companies that are already short of skilled workers are unable to fill vacant positions and are spending more and more to treat the addicts who are on their payrolls. Smaller companies in rural areas where opioid addiction is

widespread have suffered the most because of the epidemic, but opioid abuse has also been steadily rising in major cities and has begun to impact Fortune 500 companies.

Doctors have begun writing fewer prescriptions for narcotic painkillers and are now providing patients with information on the addictive properties of the drugs. State and federal prosecutors are cracking down on prescription drug fraud cases, and the government has put new rules and guidelines in place on opioid prescribing, but more doctors and pharmacists must be educated on the new restrictions.

Many states have passed laws making access to naloxone (the "anti-overdose" drug) easier, but more first responders and even members of the general public need to be trained on its use.

Employers can contribute to ending the opioid epidemic by implementing and maintaining a drug-free workplace program that includes drug testing, and by training supervisors to recognize the signs of addiction. Employees should receive ongoing, annual drug education including information on the dangers of using opioid-based painkillers. Workers who are addicted need to be referred to counseling and treatment programs, and injured workers should be limited on the number of pills or refills that company health plans will cover.

It is also important for companies to promote an environment where employees feel safe in reporting opioid-related problems. Addiction should be treated as a health issue, not a moral failing. Workers should be encouraged to talk to supervisors if they have a problem or suspect that another employee may be struggling with prescription painkiller use.

The DRUG FREE MOUNTAIN LIFE campaign supports an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families, and communities toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.

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Teams are: help reduce the loss of human life and property; reduce resource losses; reduce the cost of suppression; improve interagency relations and communicate these plans to the public.

Increasingly, people in the wildland/urban interface zone are feeling the effects of wildland fire. Every year, families are evacuated and structures are destroyed as the result of wildland fires, and extra help is needed to help these families plan and survive the fires.

NFPET's are tools that can assist professionals and homeowners in mitigating the risk of damage from a wildland fire. The NFPET processes and

analyzes risks, hazards, and values; outlines an operational plan for the protection of resources from wildfire; and develops wildfire prevention program implementation costs.

The individuals ordered for prevention/education teams must have the skills required to fill the position for which they have been ordered. The teams are not "firefighters" in the normal sense of the word, but they are fire "preventers," coaching residents on how to prepare their homes and businesses when a wildfire threatens.

Wildfire prevention and education is mostly common sense that we already know, but sometimes it takes a team of "experts" from the outside

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country. Five percent in real numbers, however, is over 250,000 criminally minded individuals. This brings up the question of can we afford to expose 300 million Americans to so sizable a criminal element for the sake of law abiding yet illegal individuals? This is not a dilemma. The obvious answer is border control through just application of our border laws.

Of course timing has a great deal to do with the current liberal noise level, since midterm elections are coming up and they need more seats in Congress to support their agenda, which goes far deeper than immigration. Some will even go so far as stirring up the ecstasy of hate to promote their agenda, which will only lead to civil disobedience.

I would ask that both sides look together at the entire picture before taking any action.

However, I do not think that this will happen since shedding bias is a molting process that leaves a sensitive skin, which may be too unsettling for a non-inquisitive mind.

Christian Hummel

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that they look healthy and are not rotting. Signs of rot will be blackening of the roots themselves, excessive needle drop from the canopy above, or even growth of mushrooms around the base of the tree. If you determine a tree has become a hazard, always call a professional to remove your tree.

If you suspect that you have a problem with your pine trees, you can take some pictures and send them to Jacob. Williams@uga.edu. Ideal pictures will include an up-close, a picture of the entire tree, and the tree from multiple angles. In this case, quantity can make up for quality! You can also bring in a sample to the local Extension office. Just make sure that the sample is large enough to give a good idea of what is going on. For more information, contact the Union or Towns County Extension offices.

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How is it that each one of us is lost, and needs finding and rescuing? The Bible says that Jesus rescues us from "this present evil age" and "the wrath to come" (Gal. 1:4, 1 Thes. 1:10). Our place of safety is clear. "He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14). The land of the living, indeed!

Just as parents rejoice today in Thailand over their rescued boys, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels over newcomers in the Kingdom of God. You are safe in the arms of Jesus, by grace through faith, found and rescued.

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firefighting team. Their ability to get water to the fire scene makes firefighting possible.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

GWRRA meetings

Chapter J of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association (GWRRA) meets on the third Saturday of each month (excluding December) at Daniels Steakhouse, Hiawassee. Fellowship/food at 11 a.m. with the meeting at noon. We welcome riders of all motorcycle brands located in the north Georgia area. We focus on friends, fun, riding safety, and knowledge. Check our website for ride schedule. For further information, you may contact Dave or Judy Hurd at 828-369-5918. www.chapterj.gwr-ra.com. NT(0118,22)CA

to show us the obvious ways to save our property and lives.

For more information on NFPET's or wildfires, con-

tact Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D at info.cccrd@gmail.com, or contact the local state Forestry Agency.