

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### Smoke Alarms and Escape Plans

Smoke alarms save lives. You have probably heard us say it over and over, but it is true. However, they only save lives if they are in the home; working properly and the occupants know what to do when they sound. Having working smoke alarms and knowing how to escape are two major goals of our Smoke Alarm and Public Fire Education programs.

Home furnishings today are made up of synthetic materials that generate dark, toxic gases when burning, making it impossible to breathe or see within a few moments. A person can get disoriented and overcome by this smoke. Smoke alarms alert occupants of a fire and give them more time to escape.

Our Smoke Alarm Program offers free smoke alarms to residents of Union County who are in need. The ultimate goal of the program is to have smoke alarms in every home of Union County. Residents of Union County can call the fire department or complete an online request form. The fire department will schedule a time to visit the home and install the free smoke alarms. The resident's only obligation will be to answer a few simple survey questions.

If you have smoke alarms in your home, there are a few things that you should keep in mind. First, they must work. They should be wired to the home or be battery operated. Batteries should be changed every six months. People usually change batteries when the time changes. The batteries are used to power the sensors inside the detector or as battery back-up for wired alarms. If the smoke alarms are chirping, it needs a new battery.

Now, let's say that you have smoke alarms and they are working properly. Do you know what to do when they sound? One major focus of our Public Fire Education program is teaching the home fire escape plan. This is a plan on how to escape the home when smoke alarms sound. The plan should include two ways to escape and a safe meeting place outside the home.

The family should know the plan and it should be practiced regularly. In a fire situation, when the smoke alarm sounds, a practiced home escape plan ensures that everyone knows how to use the precious minutes wisely.

Smoke alarms do save lives. Homeowners should ensure

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**Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief**  
*David Dyer*



### Suffering Cynicism

A friend and I stopped at a small, mom and pop restaurant. While waiting for our order, the proprietor sauntered over to our table to amuse us with a math challenge.

As he explained it, three men went to an inn and procured a room for \$30, which they split equally. Later the innkeeper gave the bellhop \$5 to return to the men. The bellhop decided to return \$1 to each man, meaning each man paid only \$9. So, \$9x3=\$27, the bellhop kept \$2, so that makes \$29. The final dollar disappeared, he said.

It turns out that I had heard this framing trick before, and my friend is a math teacher. So we laughed politely, and quickly unraveled the problem for him. To our astonishment, he became agitated and insisted, "No, that's not right! Numbers lie, and you can't trust math!" We explained again, and he retorted that he'd told this story many times and we were the only ones that wouldn't admit the dollar was indeed lost in the mysteries of math.

The proprietor derived a certain ironic pleasure from the trick, which to him was not a trick at all. For him to believe the truth we presented plainly to him on the back of a napkin meant that he would have to admit error and abandon his arrogant conclusion that you can't trust math.

I heard it said once that a skeptic doesn't believe what is true and a cynic doesn't care what is true. Our restaurateur clearly didn't care to consider the truth about the math because that would have damaged his sense of superiority over math and affected his ability to impress customers with cleverness. He was a suffering cynic.

Jesus made a blind man see. The man and his parents knew who did it. But under withering inquisition, the parents refused to admit the truth. To say anything good about Jesus would mean a fall in their standing in the community. Their son told everything he knew, but his questioners would not accept it. To do so would mean their standing would change as well. The cost of truth was too high for them.

Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see" (John 9:39). Seeing and accepting the truth about Jesus has a cost, the loss of standing and respect

See Fowler, page 5A

**All Things New**  
*Wayne Fowler*



### Commissioner's Questions

**Q. We have been receiving flyers in the mail to sign up for a helicopter service. Is this for the one that is based at Union General Hospital?**

A. No. Air Methods does not send out flyers to Union County Residents because everyone is already a member based on the contract that Union County has with this helicopter service. Most citizens are receiving flyers for LifeForce, which is a different emergency helicopter service provider. This helicopter service is contracted by Erlanger Medical Center in Chattanooga. While it is based in Blue Ridge, it is operated by Erlanger Medical Center in Chattanooga. LifeForce generally only picks up patients from Union County if the Air Methods Helicopter is either tied up with another emergency or is temporarily out of service for maintenance. The two helicopter companies work together and support each other as backup but a flight on the LifeForce helicopter is not covered under the membership that is paid for by Union County and Union General Hospital.

**Q. Is there a need for us to purchase a membership through LifeForce that is operated by Erlanger Medical Center?**

A. The odds of needing the additional helicopter service are slim, but there is always the chance that two citizens could need to be air lifted at the same time. In the event this occurs, one would be transported on the Air Methods helicopter and one would be transported on the LifeForce helicopter. Since the membership is with Air Methods that person would not be charged, but the person transported with LifeForce would receive a bill from them. So, it is completely up to individuals on if they want to purchase the extra membership for added coverage or not. LifeForce is certainly a reputable company, but the decision is entirely up to the individual if they feel the membership could benefit them.

**Q. Will Union County and Union General Hospital be able to continue providing this emergency helicopter service to citizens in the future?**

A. Both the County and Union General Hospital look at this each year and decide if they can cover the cost for the citizens or not. We have been able to continue each year due to good plan-

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**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**  
*Lamar Paris*



### Drug Free Mountain Life

#### Synthetic Drugs

Prevention is about advancing knowledge and understanding of the risk associated with drug and alcohol use. The goal of prevention programs is to deliver the facts and provide resources to people in hopes that they can avoid the pitfalls of substance use and abuse. Prevention programs are not just for children, adolescents and teens. Every person in our community benefits from substance abuse education and resources.

Drugs are abuse are evolving and becoming more accessible and they are often purchased legally at the local convenience store. Not all drugs can be detected in over the counter drug screens that you can buy at the pharmacy or big box stores. Synthetic drugs are just as addictive and dangerous as illicit street drugs purchased from the local drug dealer.

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**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.**



CASTING A LONG SHADOW

### Chamber of Commerce

It's been said that one of the best things about living in North Georgia is that we have four seasons! The only problem with that is when we have all four in one week. While it was a little cold, it was nice to wake up and see the landscape in full color and to be able to enjoy that delicious cup of coffee while appreciating the views.

We want to remind everyone that the makeup date for the "Shoot for the Stars" golf tournament is this Friday, November 8. Due to the time change we will tee-off at 12 p.m. Lunch will be provided. I would like to thank all of our sponsors and the full field of golfers helping us to provide funds for scholarships to Union County High School students.

While it was not a Chamber event, I would like to thank all who participated with Halloween on the Square and all the other Fall Festival events in downtown. Events like these add our sense of community and help our children grow

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**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**  
*Steve Rowe*



### Letters to the Editor

#### Bipartisan on Climate Change?

Dear Editor,  
I checked on H.R. 763. You know, the climate change bill that another letter to the editor contributor says has "bipartisan" support in the House. Out of 68 cosponsors of this bill, only one — that's right, I said one — is a Republican. Look it up!

This is what the letter writer calls bipartisan? From the way he speaks about it, I thought this bill would have at least 50% support on both sides. That is not the case. If he is willing to mislead people about this one simple fact, I wonder what else he's conveniently hiding?

Just one other thing. Also in his op-ed, he says that "a CBS News poll last month found two-thirds of Americans view climate change as a crisis or serious problem, and a majority want immediate action." I'm curious... Is this the same type of CBS poll that said Hillary would win the presidency in a landslide?  
**Claude Rains Jr.**

#### Commendation

Dear NGN Editor and Staff,  
Thank you for the outstanding coverage you have provided on the Gowder/Heaton scandal. Special thanks to Shawn & Linda. We have carefully followed this extremely sorry episode in local history and look forward to your future article detailing the sentencing. Good work!  
**Wm. Ronald Gibson**

#### The Great Deceiver

Dear Editor,  
What is a lie? Anything that is not true. We live in a world of misconception where Satan has pulled the wool over millions of people's eyes who have embraced Satan's lies and in essence have sealed their own fate. People who have stopped going to their house of worship where once they heard the gospel are now wide open to the cults and "isms" of our day. That is why so many of the cults go around on Sunday morning knocking on doors. They know that these weak people will not be in church on Sunday. What better time to tell them that there is a better way than the cross, which is just a made-up story in the first place.

I am simply amazed at some intelligent people who have heard the truth of God's Word yet reject it and turn to the wildest cult imaginable. They will follow someone who is absolutely a phony because it makes them feel better about themselves, for they cannot face the truth. Folks, the truth of God's Word has never been popular in any society that has existed on this

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