

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Parents: The Anti-Drug

Did you know that kids from rural areas and the suburbs are more likely to have problems with drugs or alcohol than city youth? The risks facing teenagers today are very real. They are also very different for every teen and they might even surprise you. Despite all the warnings, 30 percent of students report that they've ridden one or more times in the last month with a driver who had been drinking.

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.

The good news is that most of today's teens are thriving. Adolescents today are less likely to drink, smoke, do drugs, get pregnant, commit a violent crime or drop out of school compared to their parent's generation. They volunteer more than ever before and are actively exploring their spirituality. They are more tolerant and more likely to have friends with different ethnic, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds. And most teens would even say they have positive relationships with their parents, siblings and friends. In short they are finding their way, but not without the involvement and presence of YOU, the parent.

Surveys of teens show that they want and expect their parents to play a key role in their lives. They appreciate you. They listen. They remember your advice. Even when it seems like they're not paying attention, they hear you. They want to know you have a boundary for them and your rules are their safety net. Teens need (and secretly want) your help and guidance.

The common thread among teens who do well academically and socially, and stay healthy and drug-free, is that they have close relationships with their parents. These teens report that their parents are interested in them, in what they do and in who they know. They also say their parents are curious about their lives and their ideas. They feel connected, because their parents listen to them and take time to find out what's going on in their world.

This only makes sense. Teens who are close to their parents or a trusted adult caregiver have more at stake when it comes to decisions about risk-taking. At that moment of truth when they are confronted with a risky choice, they don't want to disappoint their parents or betray their trust. They are also more open to their parent's advice. In fact, if you are connected, supportive and responsive to your teen,

See *Parents*, page 5A

Happily Incompatible

Billy and Ruth Graham were married 63 years when she died in 2007. You might think that such a godly and respected couple had a perfect marriage, though they never claimed that. But it was successful because they understood love.

In *Just As I Am*, Rev. Graham wrote, "Ruth and I don't have a perfect marriage, but we have a great one. For a married couple to expect perfection in each other is unrealistic. We learned that even before we were married."

They met as students at Wheaton College in Illinois. It was an inauspicious beginning, he in his grubby work clothes and, well in his words, "There she was. Standing there, looking right at me, was a slender, hazel-eyed movie starlet!" They soon began to date, only for their differences to begin to emerge. In some ways it seems remarkable that they ever made it to the altar.

Ruth was born to missionaries in China, and she was determined to serve in Tibet, but Billy was just finding his calling as an evangelist. She was Presbyterian, he an ordained Baptist minister. Nevertheless, Billy asked her to consider marrying him, and waited. She wrote her parents, "We've got such strong wills, I almost despaired of ever having things go peacefully between us." Then came the tests of distance, as she left to attend her sick sister in New Mexico and his itinerant ministry grew. She wondered, "What is it going to be like after we're married? I probably won't see as much of him then, as I do now." It did not help that Billy accepted a pastorate without informing his fiancé, insensitive on his part.

She finally accepted, and they wed in August 1943 near Montreat, North Carolina. An evening ceremony with a full moon, amid candles and clematis in a small chapel, they became husband and wife. "It was the most memorable day of my life," he recalls.

Decades later, he surmised that a married couple could be described as "happily incompatible." "The sooner we accept that as a fact of life, the better we will be able to adjust to each other and enjoy togetherness." Because of their differences, the

See *Fowler*, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. What is the actual population of Union County?

A. According to most recent data for Union County the population was 21,984 in 2014. 553 of those live inside the city limits of Blairsville. Our population has slowly but steadily increased over the years with us having 21,324 in 2010 census. They hope to have the new population data for 2015 by May.

Q. What is the Unemployment Rate in Union County?

A. The most recent statistics we have are for December 2015. The Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research has Union County's Unemployment rate at 4.5%. This rate has been steadily decreasing. In April of 2015 our unemployment rate was at 5.3%.

Q. How does Union County's unemployment rate compare to other counties close to us?

	A. July	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Union	5.3%	5.7%	5.0%	4.7%	5.0%	4.5%	4.5%
Lumpkin	6.1%	6.2%	5.3%	5.3%	5.1%	4.8%	4.9%
Rabun	6.9%	6.9%	6.5%	6.4%	6.3%	5.9%	6.0%
Towns	8.3%	8.1%	7.0%	6.9%	6.5%	6.2%	6.9%
White	5.4%	5.6%	4.8%	4.7%	4.6%	4.3%	4.4%

Q. How does our region compare to the state's unemployment numbers?

A. The average unemployment rate for our North Georgia Mountain 13 county region is 5.0%. This region includes Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White counties. The Northeast Georgia Region rate (counties located just below our region) is 4.9% and the Northwest Georgia Region (Rome, etc) is 5.3%. The Atlanta Region has a rate of 5.0% while the Southern Georgia Region is 5.7%. This makes Union County's rate of 4.5% lower than the average of most Georgia regions. Since all of these numbers are relatively low, it at least lets us know that our county is doing better or on par with the rest of the state.

Q. Do you know the number of workers Union County has in the labor force?

A. According to the Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Statistics and Economic Division, our labor force is approximately 9,846.

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



See *Paris*, page 5A

Letters to the Editor...

Prescription Drug Arrests

Dear Editor,

Our community is reeling in regards to the news about six people, most notably, health professionals, who have been arrested for prescription drug distribution, among other charges.

Whether the arrested are guilty or not, it is

See *Taber*, page 5A

Celebrate Arbor Day

Dear Editor,

Arbor Day, traditionally celebrated in Georgia on the third Friday of February, is a day set aside to reflect on the importance of trees. They contribute to the beauty, privacy, and value of our individual properties and our neighborhoods; cover our mountains with lush forests, which support thousands of jobs related to tourism and recreation, and produce millions of dollars in revenue; provide food and habitat for many birds and animals, shade for native plants, and cool temperatures for

See *Teffeteller*, page 5A

Avian Influenza

It seems the poultry industry started 2016 off on the wrong foot as an avian influenza (AI) outbreak spread through flocks in Indiana. Over 248,000 infected turkeys and 156,000 chicken layers were lost. Naturally, outbreaks such as this are worrisome for Georgians as our number one agricultural commodity is broilers, but by both commercial producers and backyard flock owners working together to understand the virus and prevent its spread, we can keep our birds happy and healthy!



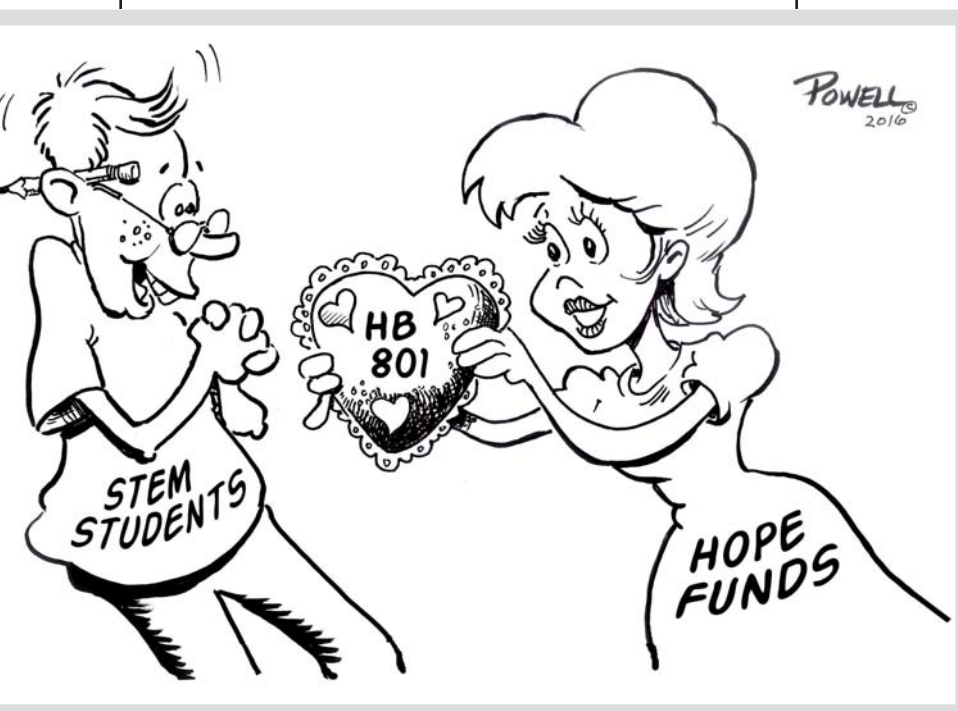
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee

There are two types of AI: low pathogenic (LPAI) and high pathogenic (HPAI). LPAI often goes undetected in flocks as it rarely causes sickness and, even if it does, symptoms are very minor. This type of AI also occurs naturally in wild birds, especially water fowl, and is not usually a cause for concern as flocks are so seldom affected by it. However, LPAI strains sometimes mutate to become HPAI strains, as was the case in Indiana last month. HPAI strains are highly infectious and elicit severe symptoms in birds, including diarrhea, nasal discharge, swelling of the eyelids, combs and wattles, purplish discoloration of wattles and combs, lethargy, and sudden death. It's especially important to be on the lookout for excessive diarrhea, because AI is spread primarily through feces.

While there have been cases of HPAI strains infecting humans, they are rare and usually caused by close contact and improper handling of infected birds, so don't panic! However, with the inclement weather driving waterfowl farther and farther south, it's still important to protect yourself and your birds. You can do this through 6 steps.

1. Keep a distance: Restricting access to your birds from roaming animals and other flock owners can minimize the chance of people or animals exposing your birds to the virus. If you're a small flock owner, keep your birds sheltered in coops as much as you can to keep them away from wild bird feces.
2. Keep it clean: When you tend to your flock, always wear clean clothes that have not been exposed to any other poultry.
3. Don't bring it home: Even though it's inconvenient, it's important to clean truck tires, cages and equipment regularly as the virus can live on these items for months if the conditions are cool and moist enough.
4. Don't borrow the disease: We all like to be neighborly, but letting someone else with birds borrow equipment and tools can put your own flock at risk. If you do share equipment, make sure to clean it thoroughly before taking it home.
5. Know the warning signs: Monitor your birds regularly for any of the symptoms I mentioned previously. Early detection is the best detection!
6. Report sick birds: If you think your

See *Mattee*, page 5A



Your Fire Department Part 2

There are many things that come to mind when it comes to the fire department. People think of firefighters in turnout gear. They think of hoses, spraying water and of course, they think of fire stations and the big red fire trucks. Union County Fire Department has a total of 12 fire stations. The stations are strategically placed throughout the county to provide the best fire and rescue coverage. Eleven of these stations are volunteer stations and have an average of eight firefighters who are assigned to and operate from that station. The administrative station, where the career firefighters operate and respond from, is Station 1, located on Shoe Factory Rd. Every fire station must be certified by the Georgia Firefighters Standards and Training Council (GFSTC). To be certified, the station must meet the GFSTC minimum requirements for equipment and firefighters operating out of that station.

As you drive by a fire station, you may wonder what's in each station. Each station has a certified Class A pumper. A Class A pumper can carry at least 1000 gallons of water and can pump anywhere from 750 to 1250 gallons of water per minute. The pumper carries an assortment of required equipment ranging from hand tools to the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus. It also carries approximately 1,500 feet of fire hose of various sizes which is used to place water on the fire or to supply water from a hydrant to the fire scene. The Class A pumper is necessary in order to certify the fire station.

Some stations have a tanker in the station which also carries equipment and water to the scene of a fire. These tankers are very valuable in areas where there are little to no hydrants. Each tanker can carry 1000 to 2000 gallons of water. The department also has five State of Georgia certified rescue trucks that carry rescue equipment including the power tools also known as the Jaws of Life. These rescue vehicles are also strategically placed throughout the county in the main fire stations. A few stations have other support vehicles to carry equipment or personnel to the scene. The rescues, tankers and support vehicles respond to fires, medical calls and various other emergencies.

If you are driving by a fire station and see someone there, stop in and look at your fire station; ask the firefighters about the station. We would be happy to show you the lifesaving equipment. The best opportunity is the open house that the fire stations present each year. The open house is where the firefighters invite the public to visit their station and view demonstrations of the apparatus and equipment. Look for the announcements in the annual letter drive and the newspaper.

Union County Fire Department
— Our Family Protecting Your Family

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Ramblings

Now that I have completely retired from UGA Cooperative Extension my duties and work have changed as well. No longer will you see me doing the work of a County Agent. Now you can find me managing the Farmers Market/Canning Plant, serving on the Board of Directors of the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC and filling in temporarily, as the Young Farmer Advisor of Union County. I ramble around doing many different things similar to my ancestors which rambled around the country in the early days of our nation.

The Baker Family had many experiences that shaped our family's views. For example, two brothers were living up in the Pennsylvania area where they began making firearms while our country was still a collection of colonies. The Baker Rifle soon became a very good firearm and was actually a precursor to the Pennsylvania and Kentucky Rifles. The men became so good that they were actually called to England to make firearms for the King. Shortly after coming home from England the colonies became involved in our Revolution. These brothers' sons were still in the business of making rifles and were called upon to manufacture weapons for the Continental Army. Their business was located around Pittsburgh. Later, after our freedom was obtained a son of the rifle makers moved his young family to North Carolina.

A son of this North Carolinian was Hiram Baker and he moved his family from Eastern North Carolina to Union County and can be found on the 1850 census as a resident of our Blue Ridge Mountains. But, for some reason he moved his family from the Blairsville area to Franklin County, Alabama where his grandson, Charlie Baker, would become my great grandfather.

Sometimes I wonder if Hiram knew any of the local people who lived here. I wonder if he knew the fellow who felt the call to preach and was unsure of his ability. So, he would climb to the top of a mountain and stand upon a rock and practice preaching to all the critters in the woods who would listen. These sessions went on for 5-6 months until the man felt he could bring a proper sermon whereupon he announced his calling to a church in the Suches area. The rock he practiced on is now called Preacher's Rock. It can be found on Big Cedar Mountain just east of Woody Gap on the Appalachian Trail.

Did he know about the Indian Rock over in eastern Union County? There is a rock in that area where the Cherokee used to cut chunks of soapstone from a huge house sized boulder. These cuts of rock were used to make bowls of stone to be used as utensils in the homes of the Cherokee.

See *Cummings*, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



UnPasta Salad

I'm not sure why, but every winter I get inspired to be much more creative with vegetables. Every week, May through October, I'm at the Farmers Market and I seem to plan my menu around the same comfort recipes I've always used. I suppose that the veggies are so fresh that time of year that I also like to keep them particularly simple, in order to satiate myself with that "just out of the garden" taste. Checking expiration dates on bagged produce that has been shipped from another continent has a way of realigning the creative culinary juices.

There are also several new products out that have helped me substitute the starches that I don't ever eat (potatoes, pasta and rice), so that I can enjoy some of the dishes I've missed without including these carbohydrate laden staples.

Let's start with pasta. I love, love, love shrimp scampi as well as white clam sauce, both traditionally served over a bed of spaghetti. A few Market seasons ago, I introduced the attendees to my Pasta Carbonara recipe, using zucchini that was shredded with a potato peeler as a substitute for linguini. The recipe was a hit. In the last couple years, the culinary supply industry has taken this concept and created a few "gadgets" that make this veggie pasta so easy to prepare. For Christmas, Santa gifted me with a Veggetti. It's actually a \$10 spiralizer that takes raw vegetables and creates ribbons of spaghetti out of them.

Unlike flour based pasta, these vegetable noodles can be used raw or can be cooked. Imagine a delicious raw bowl of spiralized zucchini and yellow squash that has been marinated in herb based olive oil, a lemon balsamic vinegar, fresh chopped basil and parsley. Make it an Italian Pasta salad by adding chopped cured black olives, salami, cherry tomatoes, cubed provolone

See *Leone*, page 5A

Farmers Market Moment

JoyAnne Leone



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West
Owner/Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer

Website: www.nganews.com

E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com

Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514



Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m.

Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - 1 Year \$35.00. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1987 at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. Advertising and subscriptions can be paid by cash, check or credit card.

Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514