

Opinions

Everybody has one...

A family reunion

Two Saturdays ago, Union County Fire Station 4 hosted the largest Open House in recent memory for that station. On Saturday, Station 2 hosted a very well attended Open House at the Jones Creek Fire Station.

To be among the crowd of folks that attend the fire station open houses truly is an honor.

Open House is an opportunity for the community to come together, break bread and get to know their fire station.

Some will get to know these dedicated individuals more than others. That's because on occasion, they may have to call on these dedicated folks at any time of the day or night.

On Saturday, families arrived, their children in tow. They went through the food line, where hamburgers, hot dogs and all the fixings were available. Coolers filled with soft drinks and water awaited these folks after they filled their plates.

Firefighters sat down with the families, explained the equipment that was in the fire station and said thank you to the families, because their donations help make Fire Station 2 a reality.

I say the event was reminiscent of a family reunion because the folks that make up the command staff of Station 2 and the other fire stations within our community are made up of dedicated volunteers.

The volunteers are a bridge to the paid firefighters. If the volunteers didn't exist, the paid firefighters would be busy as a one-legged man in a can kicking contest.

The Open House also serves as an opportunity to let the youngsters learn a thing or two about firefighters. It's also a chance for them to eat a hamburger, hot dog, a cookie or two, and an ice cream sandwich.

The Open House is about building a tradition from young to old, a tradition that we all have to work together to make our community safe and strong.

I dare say that some of the youth that attend the Open Houses will one day themselves become volunteer firefighters.

Volunteer firefighting is a very rewarding and valuable way to serve your community. It takes dedication and many hours of training to become a firefighter.

We tip our hats to all volunteer firefighters and if you're in the neighborhood of an open house, stop in, break bread and drop a tip in the boot.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Museum of the Bible

Something good is happening in Washington, D.C. for a change! In Fall 2017, the Museum of the Bible opens. Its purpose is to "be an unparalleled experience, using cutting-edge technology to bring the Bible to life."

The non-profit Museum is designed to portray the history and context of the Bible, spanning time and culture.

The organization "invites all people to engage with the Bible through our four pillars: research, traveling exhibits, education, and a museum." Once the Museum is complete, all four pillars will be in place.

The remodeled building in D.C. will house 40,000 planned artifacts, including cuneiform tablets, Dead Sea Scroll fragments, Biblical papyri, Torah scrolls, and rare printed Bibles in 430,000 square feet of exhibits costing over \$1 billion. Not only housing exhibits on the history and impact of the Bible, the Museum contains research labs and libraries for scholarly inquiry, a Nazareth Village display of Jesus's home town, and Biblical Gardens.

The Green family of Hobby Lobby provided the startup funds. Steve Green said, "This nation is in danger because of its ignorance of what God has taught. If we don't know it, our future is going to be very scary." The board includes Rick Warren and other Christian leaders and scholars.

Cary Summers became President about five years ago. He said, "There is not a major museum in the world about the most sold book ever in history, the most debated book ever. We thought it was really odd, and so we said, 'Let's do something about that.' And we did." He reports that despite the expectation that city approvals would be difficult to obtain, the Museum actually received little opposition. In fact, the city council person most likely to oppose it stated it's "the most important project to come into the neighborhood."

If its importance is to relegate the Bible to a museum, the project would be ironic not to mention calamitous for mankind. But a museum like this celebrates God's Word as powerful in the lives of people, and introduces it to people who don't know

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. When is the Union County monthly meeting?

A. The official County Meeting is each month on the third Thursday evening at 6 p.m. The purpose of the county meeting is so that you will know about what is going on in the county. Contracts, resolutions, ordinances (first and second readings), proclamations, public hearings and much more are brought up at the meeting. Rarely something will come up to cause me to reschedule a meeting, but it is rare and usually only once or twice a year and a notice is placed in the *North Georgia News* and on the courthouse doors.

Q. Can we ask questions at the county meetings? Where we can from you could only speak for 5 minutes and you had to write or call in prior to the meeting just to be placed on the agenda.

A. Our meetings are not like that. We announce to the agenda what has gone on the previous month, the decisions that have been made and once the business section of the meeting is over, which is usually less than 30 minutes, then the meeting is opened up for questions and you are welcome to ask any questions you would like to ask. Only if there were a controversial issue with the potential for lots of questions, would we put a time limit on speaking. That has not happened in several years.

Q. How long do county meetings usually last?

A. Normally less than 45 minutes and often less than 30 minutes.

Q. Do you usually have a lot of questions at a county meeting?

A. Normally we do not and half a dozen would be a lot. One of the main reasons is that we try to be very accessible throughout the week and month to you and furnish information to the public on a regular basis so that you do not have to attend a county meeting in order to ask a question. However, we appreciate those that take the time to come to our meetings and encourage others to attend when you can.

Q. How does your office communicate with the public?

A. There are several ways to reach my office. First is the telephone for my office at (706) 439-6000. Second is e-mail at union-county@uniongov.com. Third is to personally come to my office to

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor...

Our special Peeves

Dear Editor,

We all have our particular pet peeves, be someone's untidiness, lack of help around the house, even leave the seat up or down, whatever. My pet peeve involves drivers. When I learned to drive some 55 plus years ago, I was taught to drive right and pass left. Also courtesy to other drivers.

A few weeks ago I was returning one evening from Blairsville and when I reached the two lane section of Hwy. 76 by the EMC building, I moved over to the left lane to pass a slower vehicle. Not far along I came up on a red SUV moseying along in the left lane. While still at a respectable distance I flashed my lights. For those who don't know, that is the international request for passage. The vehicle ignored my request but I noticed that the distance between us had closed rapidly, making it obvious that the driver had lifted off the accelerator. When the gap was about a car and a half the driver put on the brakes. Fortunately with that amount of gap there was plenty of room for me to just pull into the right lane. I passed the vehicle without making any fuss, however, honored with a cacophony of horn blowing. While passing I no-

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Drug Free Mountain Life Youth Event Brings Questions from Kids



Shanna Prather of New Hope Counseling speaks to adolescents about drug use

On Wednesday, May 11, 2016 the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition welcomed over 70 attendees to the first Drug Free Mountain Life Youth Event.

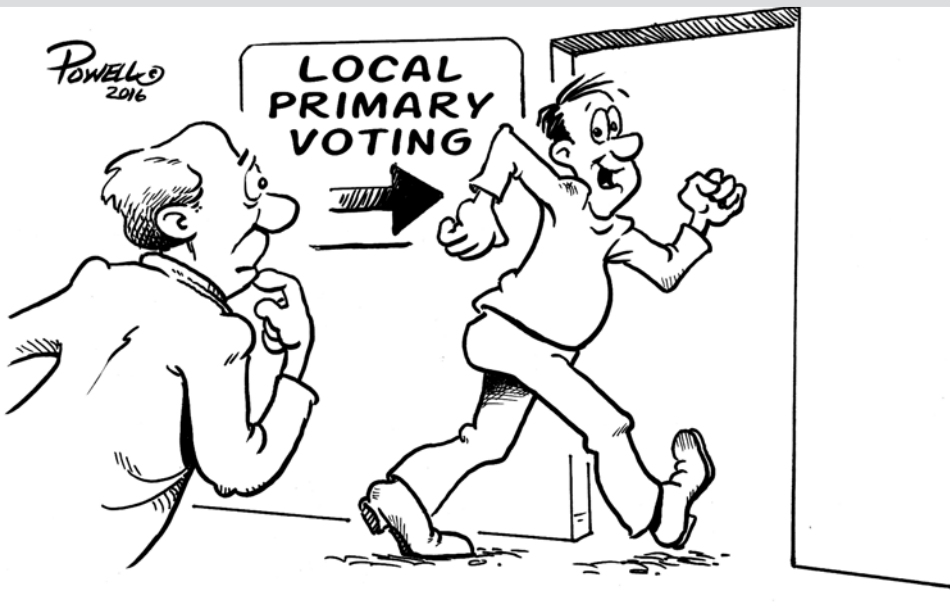
The program was held at the Union County Community Center and was the first of a new brand of youth education and prevention programs under the Drug Free Mountain Life campaign.

The kids attending mostly ranged in ages 12 to 18 and many were from local church youth groups, but whole families attended as well. Powerful poster board testimonies started off the evening with participants sharing their touching stories in just a few phrases. One told of starting with marijuana at age 13 and becoming an alcoholic by age 32. Another testimony poster was carried by a mother who lost her son to heroin just last year. Those in recovery wrote on their poster board about their struggle as an addict in recovery.

The group also watched an FBI video about drug use and addiction. Then Shanna Prather of New Hope Counseling talked about the myths that kids may have heard about drug use, peer pressure to use and statistics on opiate overdose deaths. She said that in 2014 over 28,000 people died in the U.S. from opiate overdoses. That number is more than the whole population of Union County. When she asked how many kids knew someone who was using drugs, quite a few hands went up.

After another video showing the physical effects of drug use on the body, some of the written questions from the audience were answered by Shanna Prather, Chantel Patterson

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"Oh, this is a lot different from the presidential primary. This time who we vote for really counts!"

Hydrant Inspections

One of the many non-emergency fire and rescue tasks performed each year by the firefighters of Union County Fire Department is fire hydrant inspections and maintenance.

Currently, there are over 975 fire hydrants in Union County and the number continues to grow.

Union County Fire Department must inspect each hydrant to ensure that it is in good working order and that the department will have water in the event of a fire.

Inspecting fire hydrants is also one of the many tasks that we must perform to maintain our Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating of 4/4y.

Firefighters locate each hydrant and record the GPS location. They then take the caps off and grease them so that they are easier to take off in an emergency. Then the hydrant is opened or turned on to ensure that there is water on the system and that the hydrant is in working order. The hydrants are not flushed at that time. This process is typically begun in the late spring and goes on throughout the summer until completed.

You may see firefighters in various marked vehicles on the side of the road or off the banks doing these tasks. Please be aware of the move over law if you see fire vehicles with flashing lights on to ensure the safety of the firefighters checking these hydrants.

One thing that homeowners can do to help with this process is to take the time to look at the hydrants in your yard or in your neighborhood. These hydrants are there to protect you and your property.

Fire hydrants that are covered with weeds and brush are not visible or easily accessible in an emergency. If a hydrant is on your property, please take the time to cut the grass and trim around these hydrants to make them more visible and accessible. Make sure that these hydrants are not blocked by anything else on your property like gates, retaining walls, vehicles, landscaping or shrubbery.

Remember these hydrants are there to protect you and your neighbors and anything that slows down the process of finding and/or accessing these water sources can seriously affect the outcome of a fire.

If you locate a hydrant that looks damaged or is leaking contact your water department or Union County Fire Department.

Fire hydrants are a very important part of the job of firefighting. Union County Fire Department places a great deal of man-hours and effort into the inspection and maintenance of each hydrant.

With your help, we will be able to locate and utilize the hydrants in a fire emergency.

Union County Fire Department
~ Our Family Protecting Your Family ~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Jesse James

My Pawpaw Adams' sister Lula married a man by the name of Early James. The last time I can remember Early must have been prior to 1970. He was tall and lanky and wore a pair of overalls. His fingers were stained due to his always holding a filter-less Lucky Strike cigarette. Even as a young boy I thought he was ancient. I cannot remember a kid who did not like Uncle Early. When we went to his house we sat on the steps of his large front porch and listened as he regaled us with stories from his youth.

Some of his stories were about baseball. Uncle Early was a fine pitcher in his younger days. Other stories were about his family. Uncle Early was born prior to 1900 and his father was born sometime around the end of the Civil War. We were told that the elder James was a first cousin to the outlaws, Frank and Jesse James. As Uncle Early told it the James Gang came to north Alabama in their hay day and robbed a train near Spruce Pine, AL.

There was a very high trestle about half-way between Phil Campbell and Spruce Pine that crossed a very deep hollow. At one time this was the highest trestle in Alabama. I am not sure if the trestle is still there however, my mother walked across the trestle as a little girl.

Anyway the James Gang robbed the train and supposedly buried the loot at the bottom of the deep hollow close to the train trestle. People have looked for this buried treasure for years with no results. This was one of the stories told to me by Uncle Early.

When I was about 12, Papa Cummings purchased a 60-acre tract of land from a fellow with the last name of James. I have always loved that particular piece of land. As a boy we squirrel hunted and coon hunted the property. There is a deep hollow with 100-foot high bluffs on the land and during my teenage years, TVA built a fine lake on the property. Our family has referred to this piece of property as the James Place ever since my grandfather purchased it. I was fortunate enough to purchase a portion of this land from my grandfather a few years ago.

Right after Papa purchased the land I met the wife of this James fellow. She looked ancient as every other person I knew with the last name of James. I didn't know her exact age, but, she looked older than even Uncle Early. She must have been born prior to 1900.

Anyway, back about 1935 Mr. James had purchased some timber and he needed a little cash from his bank account. So, Mrs. James made a trip to the "Farmers and Merchants Bank" in Phil Campbell. The Bank President was walking through the lobby and met Mrs. James as she walked into the bank. Now, you need to know the President, Obadiah Allman knew Mr. James, but,

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



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