

## Flu...from Page 1A

so limit contact with sick people.”

Furthermore, Palmer encouraged folks to keep items shared by others in their work and home environments clean.

Lead Nurse Bethany Barrett of the Union and Towns

County Health Departments added that, if people are experiencing flu-like symptoms, they should wear a mask.

Both Palmer and Barrett said the statistics they have are statewide and that there was no county-specific information

available at press time.

“Sometimes we may see high activity in part of the state, not so much in another part,” Palmer said. “But this year it’s been statewide; it’s all over the state.”

Palmer and Barrett

also said that, though Health Departments do administer flu shots, they do not treat influenza. Therefore, it is recommended that people experiencing flu-like symptoms seek help from health care professionals.

## Fort Sorghum...from Page 1A

looked at all options for this property for many years ... and decided there’s no foreseeable use of this property by the county,” Paris said. “It’s been determined that it’s in the best interest of the county to transfer the property to the Union County Development Authority for the purpose of being sold.”

Paris said that, while the county could sell the property itself, if his office were to originate the sale, it would have to be sold to the highest bidder regardless of the new owner’s intended use. He added that he was also wary of leaving himself open to accusations of impropriety in the sale.

“However, transferring the property to the Development Authority allows it to be sold at a fair market price, and allows for some control as to who purchases the property and for what purpose and at what price,” Paris said. “The Development Authority, because they have a board and they have a director, they meet, they discuss ... and they vote, and they decide on a sale price.

“We negotiate with them for a percentage that we’ll pay them for doing this. We haven’t set that out yet. Normally, it’s in the 10-15% range, so the majority of the money comes back to the county.

“In August of 2017, we had this property appraised at \$225,000. We feel like it may be worth more than that now, since some adjacent property has sold at a higher price.

“Of course, the Development Authority will be trying to get the maximum amount of money for the property, assuming the use they feel is good for the economy and the future of the county and the city.

“There’s been several people over the last year that have come to the county and had an interest in buying the property. And because of the

demand of those people coming to us and asking us about it, that’s why I got serious in looking at it.”

Paris said that Development Authority Executive Director Mitch Griggs believed the location would be a great place for possible retail expansion, and Griggs attended the Dec. 27 called meeting to accept the transfer of the Old Fort Sorghum property.

“We see that particular parcel as being a good place for commercial activity,” Griggs said. “It doesn’t lend itself to industrial use; it would be, certainly, out of context and out of place. It doesn’t lend itself well to warehousing, distribution. We need more of that in the community, but that’s not the place for it.

“One of the things we’re extremely sensitive to is trying to make sure that we’re helping



Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris met with UCDA Executive Director Mitch Griggs Dec. 27 for the transfer of the Old Fort Sorghum property for selling.

Photo by Mark Smith

to develop the community in a responsible way. We want development. We want jobs. We want to grow the tax digest. We want to create opportunity

within the county. “But we want to do so in a very, very sensitive and responsible way.”

## Georgia Mountain Writers Club celebrate the holidays



Georgia Mountain Writers Club Christmas gathering

Georgia Mountain Writers Club members celebrated the holidays with a break from their monthly meeting. Instead we gathered with spouses or friends at Brothers Willow Ranch restaurant in Young Harris for a holiday luncheon. The food was delicious, the table decorations were lovely, and we enjoyed each other’s company. Nadine Justice made the drive from Atlanta to join us and share a chapter of the book she is working on.

Of course, no gathering of GMWC is complete without a little storytelling, and several members shared Christmas stories, both real and fictional.

Connie Rosenberry started the group off with a rather somber story of a family finding love and hope during hard times in “Santa Claus Ain’t Comin’ to Town”. This was followed by a fanciful and funny virtual view of Christmas 50 years in the future presented by

Jackie Volk. Mary Cone’s “Late Santa” recounts a true family Christmas when her husband, Alan, had to sneak a bicycle in through the freshly fallen snow, without leaving tracks. Dawn Bloodworth shared her mother’s memory of a sparse Christmas when she was a child in the 1930s. In Alan Cone’s story a hitchhiker in California ends up in Ohio instead of Flagstaff after an overnight ride. The young man curiously eyes his driver, a black man with a curly white beard and mustache that looks oddly like a black Santa Claus as he climbs from the vehicle

in front of his estranged father’s house. Christmas means everything from memories, to mystery.

The January gathering of GMWC will be at Mountain Regional Library on January 15, at 10 AM. Suggested writing topics are “Some dreams come true” or the Dream. “What will be, will be”, or “A Slippery Slope”. If you enjoy writing for pleasure or for a purpose, and would like a place to share your work, come join us. All readings need to be five minutes or less so that all have time to read.

## Clarification:

An article in the Jan. 1 edition of the North Georgia News/Towns County Herald reported briefly on comments made by Blairsville-based minister Carlos Gonzalez in the December regular meeting of the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors.

Following publication, Gonzalez reached out to the newspapers to clarify and expand on his comments.

As originally reported, Gonzalez asked the EMC to simplify the language surrounding the contract early termination fee for fiber service to make it easier for people to understand.

He also asked the board to reconsider the EMC’s policy of charging full contract price for early termination of contracts, adding that he believed the contract language to be misleading and the policy itself to be illegal.

Furthermore, Gonzalez took issue with the existence of a separate customer charge for residential customers, contending that the money collected from members for the power they use should cover the costs of the EMC without the need for a separate fixed charge.

## Clogging lessons at Folk School

Clogging lessons for beginners will be offered starting Monday, January 13, 2020. Classes are held from 4:30 - 5:15 PM in the Keith House at the John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC. For adults and children aged 6 +, no experience required. Hard soled shoes are preferable. Information: 828-837-8090 or 706-745-9211.