

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Fire Prevention Through Education

Benjamin Franklin has been quoted to say that, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Even in those days, people recognized that preventing a problem was much easier and less costly than trying to fix one once it has happened. Fire prevention follows that same concept and is a major objective of the fire service. A large part of fire prevention is through fire education.

The Union County Fire Department strategic plan places a high priority on fire education. We have developed education objectives that target all age groups. We started with education classes aimed at the students in Union County Schools.

We have established a plan to deliver 15 hours of age appropriate fire, first aid, CPR and other safety classes to students from Kindergarten through High School.

This past week, the 5th grade students took part in a fire prevention and safety class. The goal of this class was not just to teach the students critical life safety lessons but for the students to share these with their parents and other family members.

Students were taught fire science as instructors described and demonstrated the elements that are needed to create and sustain a fire. They were instructed on heat and fuel sources and the importance of identifying them in their homes.

Smoke alarms and exiting the home were discussed. Students were taught the importance of testing smoke alarms regularly and planning an EDITH... Exit Drills In The Home.

Students were to incorporate math skills by drawing a scale model of their homes and using it for a fire escape plan. They were instructed to discuss the fire escape plan with their parents and to practice these plans throughout the year.

Another topic of fire safety is keeping bedroom doors closed at night. This can prevent heat and smoke from entering the bedroom in the event of a fire.

Students were shown a video demonstrating how quickly fire and smoke conditions can spread through a home and how keeping bedroom doors closed can save their life. Students were taught how to check the door and to use the second exit if there is fire in the hall.

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Knowing Liberty

Have you heard the term "jeremiad"? It's an eponymous reference to the prophet Jeremiah, describing a complaint against the state of things and a prediction of imminent downfall.

We recently heard, "The world is going to end in 12 years if we don't address climate change and your biggest issue is how are we gonna pay for it? This is our world war two!" And, "This was an attempted overthrow of the United States government." A pundit summarized, "The questions raised by the present state of our politics, which might fairly be described as an American civil war without arms, are these: How does a nation so divided stand united in the world? How long does it remain a great nation?" Mini-jeremiads, all.

In "Last Call for Liberty," Os Guinness observes, "Political debate has degenerated into degrading and barbaric incivility, and wild talk of spying, leaking, impeachment, governability, the 25th Amendment, and even assassination and secession is in the air. American leaders are at each other's throats." Why the angst? He posits that behind America's pitched battle is a fundamental difference over what liberty means and how we keep it.

The Founders recognized that the American experiment in liberty and self-government can only work if the citizens internalize a common moral code. They saw Christianity as the accessible means to that end. Even though they failed to address African slavery, Native American rights, and women's suffrage, they created a "promissory note" per Martin Luther King, Jr. Then, as now, liberty is elusive but worth pursuing.

The paradox is that freedom is its own enemy. Guinness writes, "Freedom fails when it runs to excess and breeds permissiveness and license." It also fails "when free societies become so caught up in the glory of freedom that they justify anything done in its name." He concludes, "Faith and the fear of God have been vital for freedom, for without accountability freedom corrupts itself and degenerates into mere power." When that happens, man becomes god and what a merciless god he is. Should unaccountable people intoxicated with power hold the keys?

Here is Jeremiah's "jeremiad" for his nation: "They have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



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Commissioner's Questions

Q. When does the Farmers Market open this year?

A. The Farmers Market is scheduled to open Saturday, June 1st this year. The hours are still the same as they have been in the past which are 7am to 1pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 6pm on Tuesdays. The calendar is full of special event days this year such as Heritage Day, Green Bean Festival, Johnny Appleseed Day and the Butternut Creek Pumpkin Festival. For more information, you can visit their website at www.ucfarmermarket.com or you can call them at 706-439-6043.

Q. Is there a list available of the events that will be at the Farmers Market this year?

A. Yes, there is. You can go to the Farmers Market website at www.ucfarmermarket.com and click on the Farmers Market tab in the information line that will prompt a drop down box, then click on the Events tab in the drop down box, and see the list there. You may also click on the Events line in the light blue box that says Related Information. This calendar has the full list of events being held at the Farmers Market, and is updated regularly. Be sure and pay attention to the dates on the calendar because some of the events will be on Tuesday evenings.

Q. I see things happening already at the Farmers Market. What is going on?

A. We have a Trash to Treasures Sale every Friday from 7:30am to 1pm. The Trash to Treasures opened on April 19th and is at the Farmers Market on Fridays, with the exception of May 17th and May 31st which had been booked previously for a special event. So there will be no Trash to Treasures Sale on those dates. Starting this year we have also added a Tuesday night for the Trash to Treasures Sale. So beginning June 4th you will be able to attend Trash to Treasures on Tuesday nights from 2pm to 6pm along with the regular Tuesday night Farmers Market, and on Fridays from 7:30am to 1pm.

Q. You keep saying Trash to Treasures Sale so, what is that?

A. Trash to Treasures is a program where people can bring items to the Farmers Market to sell. Some examples are New and Used items, Crafts, Tools, Recreation Equipment, Toys, Yard Art,

Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



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Drug Free Mountain Life

Substance Abuse and High Risk Behaviors

Research shows that the majority of adults who meet the criteria for having a substance use disorder started using substances during their youth. Adolescent substance use is also associated with sexual risk behaviors that put young people at risk

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.

for HIV, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and pregnancy. The 2017 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that 29% of high school students are sexually active and 19% of those students admitted to using drugs and / or alcohol before engaging in sexual intercourse.

Substance use and high-risk sexual behaviors have common underlying factors that may predispose the teenage population to these behaviors. The most common traits among teens who engage in high-risk behaviors include lack of positive parental engagement, peers who use

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Letters to the Editor

Delta Is Ready

Dear Editor,
In a letter to the editor titled "Blatant Racism" that appeared in the May 1, 2019, edition of the North Georgia News, a self-described "educated white woman" discussed a negative encounter her rental guest — a "person of color" — recently experienced reportedly at a business in Union County. Admitting she's resided here 18 years and raised a family, she then proceeded to paint the residents of Blairsville and Union County as uneducated with the broad-sweeping brush of "blatant racism" and "ignorant hatred." There is ignorance and racism — perceived and real — everywhere, even among "educated" white women! Get over yourself, lady! Many Union County residents and merchants are from somewhere else, as you are. In the immortal words of the late Lewis Grizzard, "Delta is ready when you are!"

Peter W. White

Locked Out

Dear Editor,
I was at Walmart the other day shopping and it was raining hard, so I waited a bit, then ventured out to my car. I reached in my pocket to retrieve my keys, only to notice my greatest fear as I approached the car and looked into it: there lying on the driver's seat were none other than my keys. My first thought was I don't have another key with me, and at that moment, I could not remember whether I had a spare at home.

Sixty years of driving and finally the unthinkable Mollie Brown hits a sandbar without a spare oar. I called the wife and told her to get a number of a locksmith and have him come out as soon as possible, because I had groceries as well, and praise God, a man named Mike called and said he would be out shortly. Within 20 minutes, Mike showed up and unlocked the car and gave me my life back with keys in hand.

As I drove home, I got to thinking about who holds the keys to life and death and how millions upon millions of folks who have not accepted Christ as their Savior (locksmith) will be

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Global Warming?

Dear Editor,
After a recent article in the North Georgia News, the writer gave a very good description, I think, of how the global warming, climate change, or whatever, is a hoax. I totally agree. Is there any evidence from the scientists(?) that the present weather conditions were not duplicated 200, 400, 600 or more years ago?

L.A. Moore

Who packs your parachute?

I was raised in the real good ole days in the '50s and '60s in rural middle Georgia by two deeply Christian parents who taught me to be nice to everyone and that everyone was a person just like me no matter what race, gender, age, nationality, status, or whatever and I have always tried to live by that standard. I wonder how many times I have ignored someone or passed by because they were not in my same "league" or "status".

Happens all the time if we are not careful and you never know which one of these folks could be the one who could keep us from running into disaster or could save us from trouble by simply caring enough to say something - or not.

When I was 30, I became the General Manager of Tolleson Lumber Company's very large commercial sawmill in Perry, GA. I was green as grass and wet behind the ears in the Sawmill business but not completely naive when it came to people. I soon realized that the lowest man in the crew who swept under the mill every night could be the one who could break this young whipper snapper by seeing something going wrong and not saying something, like a fire or broken part that could cost production or even the mill.

All my career I have tried to keep this in mind and had many opportunities when that attitude came in handy in similar situations. Remember is it not the officers who row the boat, but the nameless guys down below and without them the boat is adrift and at the mercy of the current. My father (a state inspector) taught me that when you go into a business, you make friends with the office staff first and don't worry about the boss because the staff can do a lot more to help you (or not) than the boss can.

I always liked to work from the bottom up instead of the other way around, much easier that way. Here is an article I found in "Southern Loggin' Times" that proves these thoughts and caught my attention. "Back in the 1960s there was an officer, Capt. Charlie Plumb, who flew jet fighters off the aircraft carrier the USS Kitty Hawk. Charles Plumb was a U.S. Navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and he spent six years in a cruel communist Vietnamese prison before being released. He survived the ordeal and went on to lecture on lessons learned from that experience. One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in

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RC&D Executive Director



Frank Riley

Boogers in the Night

Growing up in the country kids like me learned all types of things about scary boogers or events that happened to other people. I have heard old folks talk about fluorescent green, glowing lights that followed people as they walked down lonely stretches of roads in dark woods during the night. Granny use to tell me about panthers that would try to sneak up on people to stalk and catch them unawares. I have even heard that my great-grandmother Baker haints a hill close to her home place in Northwestern Alabama. I guess it is a thousand wonders I didn't have nightmares every night when I was growing up.

Many of these stories were told to me before the TV became the far reaching influence it is today. Back in those days children and adults used their imagination more than we use our imaginations today. Back in the early 1940s Papa bought his first piece of property (80 acres) for \$100/acre. Papa and Granny cleared, farmed and live on that original 80 acres to this day. They built a small, framed house and carried water from a quarter of a mile away.

A few years after the house was built Papa dug a well right next to the house. The well was brand new and didn't even have a well house over it yet when a mishap happened. The only covering over the well was an old 2-by-12 with a tarp over it. Late one night the family milk cow fell a straddle of that 2-by-12. The cow's full weight was resting on the board and she was having trouble getting free of the well and board. She would bellow a deep, mournful, guttural sound resembling a growl from a large animal. The cow couldn't take in enough air to moo like a regular sounding cow.

Also, the well was located right next to the house and each time the cow would swing her head her horns would rake across the siding of the house. Papa got up to go check on this awful sound and each time he would reach the door the cow would bellow out this sound and rake her horns on the house. My Granny would let out a scream of terror and he would run back to check on her and his sons. Eventually, Papa gathered enough nerve to go outside and confront the demon. Today, Dad, says that it sure was funny watching his father, clad only in his drawers, run back and forth between the back door and the bedroom. He laughs about it today. But, back in those days he was plenty scared of that awful sound.

On another occasion a mad dog came to Papa's house. Granny said their house was not even finished yet. It was still summer. The walls

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Around The Farm



Mickey Cummings

Black Bears

Black bears have been coming out more and more. Let's talk about what to do if you see a bear and the steps that you can take to make sure that your home doesn't become a playground for bears.

Firstly, it's important to remember that we live in an area with copious amounts of national forest. That means black bears are out there. Hopefully, though if you encounter one you'll know what to do or how to make your space less attractive to them. Bears will typically live 8 to 15 years. The females can weigh up to 300 pounds and the males over 500 pounds. The females will give birth in their den in late January. Those cubs will stay with the mother until the following spring when she kicks them out.

Bears are omnivores meaning that they eat whatever is easily available depending on the time of year. Their natural diet is berries, fruits, acorns, grasses, insects, and even mammals. Bears can be attracted by the smell of human food if there is not much natural food available for them. Bears are naturally afraid of humans. However, bears that have been feeding on human food lose their natural fear of people, and become a danger. Bears will usually remain in an area where food is readily available, so the best way to make sure that bears don't move into your backyard is to remove the sources of food.

Never feed bears either intentionally or unintentionally. They will learn where food is available and become a nuisance for you. Make sure that your garbage is in a place that they can't reach. That means leaving it inside the garage or if you're out camping hoisting your trash in the air or putting it in a bear-proof trash can. Bird feeders can attract bears because of the high-calorie content in bird feed. Bring your bird feeders in when bears are active. Usually by the time bears are active there is plenty of natural food available for birds. Don't leave pet food out. Just give your outdoor pets enough food for one feeding. If you have a grill, clean and store it after use. Bears will be attracted by the smell of your grill so keep it out of reach for them. And finally, let your neighbors know if you see a bear so that they can take precautions too.

Most bears are not aggressive, unless they have been fed by humans before. Bear relocation is usually not an effective control option. Bears that are relocated might be moved to an area that another bear has already claimed, leading to territorial fights, or the bear may try to return to its home and be struck by a vehicle. Relocation is a last resort.

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



What an incredible week! The weather has finally broken and now we have a chance to dry out. Someone said this is Chamber of Commerce weather. While we can't take credit for the weather, our beautiful temperatures, do make it easier to promote Blairsville and Union County.

As I sit here writing this column, I am energized by the wonderful prayer service we had for the National Day of Prayer. I appreciated hearing our local Pastors, from a variety of area churches, pray for our nation, as well as, our state and local officials. Pastor Don Parmely, of New Life Family Church, and Pastor Marty Duncan, from Fellowship of the Hills Church, prayed for our Armed Forces, Law Enforcement, Fire Department, EMTs and all the local medical personnel.

The Union County local education system, including teachers and students, was covered in prayer by Pastor Terry Stuart of the Blairsville Church of Christ. All Saints Lutheran Pastor,

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Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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