

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Summer Heat

The year 2020 will go down in history as one of the strangest years on record. Everything has been strange and unusual. That includes this summer weather. We have seen a rainy and cool summer in June but in the last week or so, the summer heat has finally shown up. We may see temperatures climb to the high 90s and even over 100. The high temperatures combined with exposure to the sun can take its toll. Union County Fire Department would like to provide some safety tips for heat related illnesses.

COVID-19 has limited some of the summer activities that we usually enjoy but there are still many outside activities for summer fun. If you are outside, it's a good idea to dress in loose-fitting, lightweight, and light-colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible. Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat. Always remember the sunscreen. These tips can help you stay cool and safe during high temperature days.

The biggest concern associated with extreme heat is heat exhaustion and heat stroke. These conditions are treatable but can be deadly if allowed to progress. Heat exhaustion is usually the first to present. People who are in the extreme heat can begin showing symptoms after only a short amount of exposure.

Heat exhaustion symptoms include confusion, dizziness, fatigue, headache, muscle or abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, profuse sweating, cool, pale skin and high heart rate. Treatment for heat exhaustion is to remove the person from the heat, have them drink plenty of non-caffeinated fluids if the person is alert then cool the person. The symptoms usually resolve themselves. If the person doesn't recover from treatment or gets worse, call 911 for medical attention.

Heat stroke is a true emergency. The body has attempted to deal with the extreme heat but is no longer able to keep the body at a normal temperature. Heat stroke can lead to organ damage and death if untreated. The symptoms of heat stroke include the same as heat exhaustion except the person may become unresponsive, extremely confused, and their skin may be hot, dry, and flushed. Persons who are suffering from heat stroke should be evaluated in the emergency room. Call 911 if the person is showing symptoms or if you suspect heat stroke.

See Fire, page 5A

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Good or Bad?

"No one is good except God alone." – Jesus
Every day we are bombarded with what's wrong in the world. I just saw a photo of a post-riot street in an American city showing destroyed buildings, burned out automobile hulks, dangling utility lines, and smoky haze. Maliciously damaging someone's property is bad. In the background of that photo, a firetruck is dousing the smoldering ruins.

A steady stream of such news stories disabuses us of the notion that humans are basically good. Too much evidence exists to the contrary. The Christian concept of the "fall of man" reflects what we observe – the world God created and called "good" is infected. G. K. Chesterton pointed out that the fall is the only part of Christian theology which can really be proved, yet people "deny human sin, which they can see in the street." We can stipulate that people know what is good and may try to suppress the bad (put the fire out), yet our experience is that something is fundamentally broken about the world and the people in it.

Is it the concept of God that is broken? Anyone who would restrain my choices and self-expression is bad, including God, so the argument goes. Yet His unfathomable goodness and grace is why He calls you to deny yourself. As the Creator loves you, so He beckons you toward what is right, true, and fulfilling. Sam Allberry said, "If we know that God's words are good, we can live with constraint. We can live with sacrifice. We can say no to very deep desires that feel innate." Taste and see that the Lord is good! His yoke is easy and his burden is light. (Psa. 34:8, Matt. 11:30).

This is the God who created the universe and surrounded you with such natural wonders. What attribute would move Him to create you with freedom to either love or ignore Him? Why would He offer a divine solution to your brokenness in real time? How do you respond to a just God who by grace through faith redeems your soul for eternity? "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for his lovingkindness is everlasting" (Psa. 107:1).

The evidence shows that God is perfectly good and humanity is not. But God in His mercy made a way for you to share His righteousness. Jesus, God the Son, walked on this earth to display

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. I heard that the Governor's Executive Order dated July 15, 2020 states that counties and municipalities cannot mandate the wearing of masks. All of this is so confusing, so what does this mean?

A. This particular portion of his order simply means that city and county officials across the State of Georgia are not allowed to pass laws and ordinances that require citizens to wear a mask at all times when out in public places. For example, as Commissioner, I cannot mandate citizens wear a mask while in the park, grocery stores or many other locations. Now, individual businesses can still require masks be worn in their place of business if they chose to do so.

Q. I came to the courthouse and was required to wear a mask. Isn't this going against what Governor Kemp's Executive Order states?

A. The Governor's Executive Order dated July 15, 2020 says that no county or municipality within Georgia can pass an ordinance requiring citizens to wear a mask while in public or while on public property. But, there is also a stipulation in the Governor's Order that states any Judicial Order takes precedent over his own order. Since it is a Judicial Order that requires temperatures be taken and masks to be worn by anyone entering the Union County Courthouse this order takes precedent over the Governor's Order. So, if you enter the courthouse, you will be given a mask if you do not have one.

Q. Since early voting is taking place in the Union County Courthouse, is everyone who comes to vote required to wear a mask?

A. Yes. The Judicial Order in place by the Enotah Judicial Circuit makes wearing a mask in the courthouse a requirement by all who enter, so this includes coming in to vote. All the poll workers are also required to wear a mask.

Q. Early voting starts this week in the Union County Courthouse. I wanted to come in and vote early, but due to personal reasons I do not want to wear a mask. What can I do?

A. The good news is you have several options for cast-

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

Back to School

To the Editor,
In 2019, there were 1.7 million students in grades 1-12 in Georgia. According to current GA DPH status, one person's death has been "attributed" to COVID-19 in the 5-17 age group.

In 2018, there were 1,509 deaths due to auto accidents in Georgia, 19 percent (286) of which were in the 15-20 age group. Only one teen has died of COVID-19 in Georgia.

Also in 2018, there were 1,404 drug overdose deaths in Georgia, 68 of which were due to opioids alone in the 0-24 age group. Only one teen has died of COVID-19.

Dozens have been killed in direct response and from collateral efforts of the current rioting. The rioting and especially the destruction of his-

See Blanchard, page 5A

Yes-But Games

To the Editor,
Tired of the games! (YES, Black lives matter BUT, all lives matter!) "YES-BUT" is a defensive response used when someone doesn't agree with nor want to hear what's being said.

According to psychologists, it's one of the worst feedback mechanisms there is. Saying "All Lives Matter" is a "YES-BUT" that merely adds fuel to the fire, because the longer people feel unheard, the angrier and more emotional they become.

Saying "YES-BUT" All Lives Matter is actually a denial in disguise. What's really being said is, "We are used to the old way of being and don't want to change to a new way. Even though the change is necessary, we merely want everything back to the way it was."

If all lives matter, why is it that people of color had and still have to fight for basic civil rights? If all lives matter, why are the same people three times more likely to die in police custody than their White counterparts? Google the statistics.

The phrase "Black Lives Matter" has been explained again and again, but many "die-hards" refuse to see, hear or acknowledge the issue at hand. They'd rather play "BUT" games or hide behind their "comfort" zone.

The core of the phrase, Black Lives Matter, is simply pointing out that Black lives are undervalued in this society, and therefore more likely to be ended by the police. It's also saying that the country needs to recognize this inequality to bring an end to it.

I agree, all lives matter, but (and this is a legitimate "BUT") our society has a long history of treating Blacks as less valuable and less human than Whites. Why is there even a counter defense to that statement? Is it not true?

Perhaps a better way to understand the phrase is by saying "Black Lives Matter, Too!" Does that help? No one has ever said "Only Black Lives Matter." Right now, in this moment, Blacks are crying out for help. And your response to that is All Lives Matter? Really? "All" lives are not bleeding right now... Black lives are!

See Chavis, page 5A

What Has Happened to My Beloved Country?

To the Editor,
Several letters over the past few weeks have dealt with the current conditions of our country and its racial overtones.

I would urge every reader to read the letters from Gary Meier and Mark Adams from the June 24 edition of the North Georgia News. Each one was very well written and content extremely accurate. Their opinions exemplified that all lives matter.

Still other writers with less knowledge wrote wrongly that "All Black Lives Matter is trying to do is bring everyone, regardless of skin color, to the same stature as the rest of the citizens of our country." That is a blatant lie. Black Lives Matter stemmed from the death of one

See Crawford, page 5A



Letters to the Editor

No mask? Stay home.

To the Editor,
As Walmart and the Cincinnati-based Kroger Grocery Chain make a statement by requiring all customers to wear masks, I find it ludicrous that people believe that it is their right not to wear a face covering. To be clear, John and Jane Q. Public do not have rights of any kind once they cross the threshold of a retail business. So, if you don't want to wear a mask, then stay home and shop online.

According to a recent publication in the Journal of the American Medical Association, the CDC concluded that "cloth face coverings are one of the most powerful weapons we have to slow and stop the spread of the virus — particularly when used universally within a community setting."

The agency followed two hairstylists in Missouri who exhibited symptoms of the COVID illness but wore masks while working with clients. None of the 139 clients became ill, and 67 who voluntarily submitted for testing were shown as having negative results.

The CDC further commented that if everyone wore masks for the next six to eight weeks, this epidemic could get under control. College football may be delayed, but at least fans could return to the stadiums.

Work alongside COVID and wear face coverings. Get the unemployed employed. YOU, the public, owe the economy the comeback.
Pam Rauber

How Can You Be So Stupid?!

To the Editor,
BLM/ALM?! First and foremost, I fully support BLM, ALM, police, firemen, front-line workers and military. If being stupid was a crime, the prisons would be as grossly overcrowded as hospitals are in some areas of our nation.

When I saw the picture on the front page of the NGN for July 15, the first thing I noticed was out of the few people shown in the picture who attended the rally, not one had a mask.

The case count of COVID-19 in Union County is changing daily, and it's not decreasing. Why is it that people here are walking around like nothing is happening?! How can you be so stupid?! That goes for all Americans!

My son is a Provost Marshal working for the U.S. Government in Okinawa, Japan. The population of Okinawa is nearly 1.4 million. NHK News Japan reported not one case of COVID-19 in the civilian population of Okinawa. Guess what? Just last week, 61 cases

See Wallace, page 5A

Veto and Barbra

Due to previous encounters, Veto should have known better than trusting my father and his cousin Junior. However, he began to like the two Cummings boys and so he continued to hang out with them on Friday evenings. Prior to one Friday, the boys were in literature class and they were discussing the story of Romeo and Juliet. Veto asked Junior if he could introduce him to any girls. The larger Cummings boy told him about Barbra Lauderdale. He told Veto that Barbra was a beautiful young lady that lived out around Spruce Pine. He further stated he was sure Barbra would like to go out with Veto and that she enjoyed smooching very much.

Junior explained to Veto that Barbra's dad did not like him. However, he thought Lonnie Paul (my Dad) was a very good boy. So, it was decided that Dad would take Veto to Barbra's house to introduce him to Mr. Lauderdale. So, the boys made their plans to meet Friday evening about 7:30 to drive out to the Lauderdale house at Spruce Pine.

Unknown to Veto, Dad and Junior were setting him up for a practical joke. The Lauderdale house was an old abandoned house that was actually lived in by the Lauderdale family prior to this event. Junior was to be present in the house when Dad and Veto arrived. So, Dad met Veto in town at the Pool Hall. Veto showed up wearing enough hair tonic to wet the whole baseball team, and he was very nervous because he had never been on a date.

Anyway, Junior was in the house with a coal oil lamp lit and burning when the boys arrived. Dad knocked at the door, and Junior answered with a gruff voice, "Who's there?" Dad responded by saying, "Mr. Lauderdale, it's Paul Cummings here with Veto Gore to see Barbra." Junior asks again, "Who? Speak louder. You know I am hard of hearing." Dad yelled this time: "Mr. Lauderdale, it's Paul Cummings here with Veto Gore to see Barbra." Junior answered a third time. "Cummings? Junior Cummings, I told you to never come back to my place again." Before Dad or Veto could answer, Junior stuck a shotgun out the window of the house and fired. Dad grabbed his chest and hit the ground, yelling out, "I'm hit, Veto."

Veto spun and jumped from the porch, his feet hit the ground, and he began running. Veto ran through the front yard and jumped off a 15-foot tall bluff into a thicket of plants called the Devil's Walking Stick. These shrubs were about 8 feet tall and covered in 1-inch thorns. Dad said he heard Veto breaking sticks and then heard the

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm



Mickey Cummings

Is It Ripe?

One question that people will call me with is how to tell if a fruit or vegetable is ripe or not. Different plants ripen differently. Some will continue to ripen after they've been picked, others need to ripen attached to the plant. Let's talk about what causes plants to ripen and how to tell if some common fruits and vegetables are ripe or not.

Fruits and vegetables are divided into climacteric and non-climacteric. The difference between these groups is their response to the hormone ethylene. Ethylene is a hormone that plants produce to induce ripening. Climacteric fruits and veggies will continue to ripen after they have been picked. Non-climacteric fruits and veggies won't continue to ripen. Instead, they will soften and rot as they age. Some crops are sensitive to ethylene and so shouldn't be stored with climacteric crops that produce ethylene.

Apples, pears, peaches, plums, potatoes, and tomatoes are some examples of climacteric plants. Blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, cherries, cucumbers, eggplant, grapes, strawberries, peppers, squash, and watermelon are all examples of non-climacteric crops. Some examples of plants that are sensitive to ethylene and so shouldn't be stored with climacteric crops are asparagus, broccoli, cucumbers, green beans, kale, onions, peas, peppers, squash, and watermelon.

Now that we know a little more about the ripening process let's talk about how to tell when the best time to pick some of the most commonly grown crops around here are.

Tomatoes are an easy one to tell when they are ripe because they start to turn red. You can pick tomatoes before they are fully ripe on the vine. Because they are climacteric, they will continue to ripen. I've put tomatoes up in the kitchen windowsill so that they'll ripen. Sometimes it is advantageous to pick something before it's fully ripe so that you make sure critters don't get it before you.

Apples and pears can be a little more challenging to tell when they are ripe. Different varieties will ripen at different times. In addition, the entire tree may not ripen at the same time. If the apple or pear stem breaks away easily from the tree then it's ripe. Turn the fruit sideways to see if it pops off. Depending on the variety, you can use color to tell if the fruit is ripe. If you cut an apple open and the seeds are dark brown, it's ripe.

Blueberries will be plump with a deep blue color. They also have a white powder on the skin that keeps them fresh longer.

Squash and zucchini should be harvested
See Williams, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Steve Rowe

See Chamber, page 5A

Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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