

Opinions

Everybody has one...

National Preparedness Month

September is National Preparedness Month. This is a good time for everyone to put some thought into being prepared for an emergency or disaster. Each week of September is broken down into themes to bring awareness to each preparedness issue.

Week One encourages people to "Make an Emergency Plan" and practice it. Week Two requests that people "Learn Life-Saving Skills." Week Three's theme reminds everyone to "Check Your Insurance Coverage." Week Four reminds everyone to "Save for an Emergency."

The Department of Homeland Security's website, www.Ready.gov, provides a great deal of information to help people get prepared for disasters.

The site also has guidelines for each week of preparedness. The first week is one of the most important and involves creating an Emergency Plan. The process starts by discussing four questions with your family: 1) How will we receive emergency alerts and warnings? 2) What is our shelter plan? 3) What is our evacuation route? and 4) What is our family/household communication plan? Knowing the answers to these questions will help you and your family during a disaster.

The next step is to consider specific needs of your household. FEMA recommends that you "tailor your plans and supplies to your specific daily living needs and responsibilities." Discuss specific needs of your household. Each family should have enough supplies in their emergency kits to last for at least three days without power. Items for an emergency kit are listed on the website. Tailor your plan to your specific needs, and most important, discuss your plan with family and neighbors.

The third step is to create a communications plan in order to get in touch with your family if there is a disaster. Ready.gov has a family communication plan that can be customized to fit your needs. The last step is to practice these plans. It is much easier to practice a plan and know what to do during normal times than it is to try to figure it out when a disaster is happening.

Emergency and disaster preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Everyone should make a plan, stock essential supplies, and be able to be self-sufficient for at least three days during a major emergency. For more information on National Preparedness Month

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Worth It

What you do with your time is what you do with your life. Is your life worth what consumes your time?

J.R.R. Tolkien tells a story about writing a story. He feared he would die before completing "The Lord of the Rings," which he had been crafting for decades. He expressed his feelings in "Leaf by Niggle." Niggle was a painter, and imagined a grand forest of trees. He started painting that vision but obsessed over the details of individual leaves, and progress was slow. One day, he left on a one-way trip to a new country and saw in person that grand forest, real and vibrant. All that was left of his painting back home was a single leaf, placed in a museum.

Most of us want to be successful, and to enjoy and improve the world around us. In fact, we derive so much satisfaction from doing something well, accomplishment may be vital for our well-being. The problem is that success can seem just beyond reach, making drudgery of what you do every day. If you work only for wages, serve just for recognition, or seek simply a life of leisure, then you devise your own drudgery. Life is more than money, fame or pleasure. The Bible says God created men and women in His own image (Gen. 1:27). Since He loves, creates and works, so do we. Jesus said, "My Father is working until now, and I myself am working" (John 5:17).

What's amazing is that He invites us into that work. Note, that invitation does not apply only to "ministry," like preaching, teaching and witnessing. It says, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men ... It is the Lord Christ whom you serve" (Col. 3:23-24). He is not just an imaginary boss. He actually orchestrates your daily assignments. John Calvin wrote, "No sacrifice is more pleasing to God than when every person applies diligently to his or her own calling." The words "vocation" and "calling" share a Latin root. So your job, your work, is God's calling to join Him, even if your part seems irrelevant, inconsequential, or incomplete. Do that, and you are already successful.

Niggle's unfinished, small work pointed to a truth larger than himself. In "Every Good Endeavor," Tim Keller writes, "If

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



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Commissioner's Questions

This week's questions and answers focus on the Union County Road Department. Tommy Tanner is the Road Superintendent and is in charge of this department. These questions are some of the most common questions we receive, and the answers contain general information. If you have further questions, you can call the Union County Road Department at 706-439-6062.

Q. How do I report a road issue, like a pothole or a tree down over the road?

A. You contact the Union County Road Department at 706-439-6062. Report to them whatever the issue is, and they will schedule someone to come out and take a look at it. Of course, if there is a tree across the road, they will get out there immediately to take care of it. If it is an emergency after hours, call 911.

Q. When is the Road Department going to come and mow the sides of the road I live on?

A. The Road Department stays busy all summer trying to keep all the sides of county-maintained roads mowed. This is a huge task, and they usually only get to each road twice in the summer because we have over 500 miles of county-maintained roads to mow. If you have an issue with grass or bushes blocking your view of pulling out or other issues of safety concern, please call the Road Department immediately.

Q. Why do some of our roads have patches on them and are not totally resurfaced?

A. This is a very common question, and the answer is money!! While a new paved road LOOKS pretty, it does not necessarily function any better than a road that is patched. We can patch a paved road and it may last up to 10 years longer before having to repave the entire road. Roads wear out mostly where vehicle traffic drives. This often causes "alligator" cracking in the pavement, and while the center of the driving lane may be in the worst condition, it often spreads to adjacent areas. Therefore, patches on the road may extend almost all the way across some roads.

Q. I have requested gravel to be put on my road and all they did was scrape it? Why?

A. Sometimes people request gravel thinking this will fix

Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



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Drug Free Mountain Life

Help Your Teen Avoid Drug-Laced Food

Many of us have told our loved ones to watch out for spiked drinks at parties. But do you also need to warn your teens about drugs in their food? You may want to consider it. There is high potential for overdose from marijuana edibles.

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.

With the changing marijuana laws across the country, the generally relaxing attitudes towards the drug, and its increasing availability, accidental consumption of weed by partygoers is probably more common than you think.

In November 2017, three Michigan teens were hospitalized after they were tricked into eating marijuana-laced cereal. Police are investigating the incident and the ninth-grader who reportedly gave the students the food.

Earlier this year, North Carolina hospital employees got sick after they unwittingly

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"You know, Labor Day is a lot more fun when you have a job!"

Chamber of Commerce

SPLOST Overview

In the Aug. 8, 2018, *North Georgia News*, there was an announcement placing SPLOST V on the ballot. There have been some questions regarding how the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) projects affect the tourism industry, local businesses, and the citizens of Blairsville-Union County. I thought I would take this opportunity to reflect on both past and proposed SPLOST projects and what they mean for the local businesses and citizens of this County.

The existing SPLOST was approved by Union County voters in 2015. Here is just a small sampling of some of the projects that have and will positively affect local businesses:

New Fire Station 13 - Protecting our community while possibly lowering insurance ratings;

Improved roads and bridges, including intersection improvements for improved

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Letters to the Editor

Faith and Evidence

Dear Editor,
If I had evidence for what I believe, I would not have to believe; I would know, then we could all share in that knowledge. Believers support their belief blindly without evidence. Non-believers support their belief without evidence. Note the subtle difference between believing there is no god and not believing there is a god.

So, the lack of proof should affect each way of thinking. Those that believe in a God might well question their belief and temper their faith. Those that do not believe there is a God may reconsider and, in the light of absence of proof there is no God, change their mind.

A quandary that is faced by believers and nonbelievers alike, so far, cannot be answered. Believers say, "You must have faith." Non-believers say, "I cannot believe that which is without proof."

You may criticize me for denigrating God and religion. I am not. I am merely offering a thought process that many people do not accept.

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Do we need all this?

Dear Editor,
So, a while ago, our commissioner told us to vote for the SPLOST or he would raise our taxes. Well, the good people of Union county passed the SPLOST, and our commissioner raised our taxes anyway. We are told that there is suddenly a sharp increase in costs to the county. I believe a good manager would have known these increases were coming before the SPLOST vote and would have told us this long before now.

For many years now, the commissioner has been buying land and building all sorts of things that we could do without, or at least have done with less. We should note that all of the above-mentioned land and buildings pay no taxes at all. At what point will the county own more of the county than the people? Also, all these buildings require maintenance, and they may be new now, but in a while, they will start to run down and cost much more.

See Buck page 5A

Protest much?

Dear Editor,
No collusion, no collusion, no collusion. Witch hunt, witch hunt, witch hunt. Fake news, fake news, fake news. Enemy of the people, enemy of the people, enemy of the people. "The man doth protest too much, methinks." - William Shakespeare, 1564-1616.

Anthony Corsini

Letters to the Editor

Three-Drug Protocol

Dear Editor,
On Aug. 9, 2018, the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* ran a story about the execution of Billy Ray Irick, 59, after being on death row since 1986. The three drugs used to carry out this horror are midazolam as a sedative, then vecuronium bromide, and then potassium chloride to stop the heart. The witness said he started to turn blue, began to go rigid, and struggled uncontrollably. After several minutes of this torture, his heart finally stopped.

While I personally agree with the death penalty in this case — he raped and murdered a 7-year-old Knoxville girl — I can't help but wonder why states still use this method of execution. As a longtime owner of several dogs that had to be "put down" due to cancer or other fatal illness, I can only wonder why states don't use the same one-shot chemical to "put down" these heinous criminals. My wife and I have held the paw and watched with tears as our longtime beloved pet went quietly to sleep. I guess maybe it's too humane to change to this method.

Just wondering,
Jim Morris

Walk with God

To the Editor:
In the Bible, in the book of Genesis, we read where God allowed for people to live a long time so they could populate the earth more readily, and in Chapter 5, we find a man who walked with God. Wow! What does it mean to walk with God? This man called Enoch pleased God so much that He allowed him to walk with God. We see in scripture that Enoch did not walk with God until his first son, Methuselah, was born. Sometimes, God puts a baby in a family just for that purpose, and if that baby will not bring you to God, perhaps nothing else will. Enoch was 65 years of age when his son was born, and from that moment, Enoch walked with God. There is a story about a little girl who came home from school and told her mother what her teacher said about Enoch. The teacher told the class about Enoch and how he walked with God, and how every day, God would come by and say to Enoch, "Enoch, let's take a walk," and each day, Enoch would be waiting near the gate of his home for God to show up. And then one special day, God said to Enoch, "Let's take a long walk, for I have much to tell you." So, off they went, and soon, it was getting late in the evening, and Enoch said to God, "I guess I'd better be heading back home." And God replied, "Enoch, you are closer to My home than you are to yours, so you come on home with Me." So, Enoch went home with God. Enoch was 365 years old when he went to

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Lonnie Kent

The little town of Phil Campbell in northern Alabama was comprised of a railroad depot, grocery store, cotton gin, barber shop, post office, a dry goods store, pharmacy, a bank, pool hall and a doctor's office. A small little town that was normally very quiet and the people peaceable. However, there was a family by the name of Loughter, out to the east of town in a little community called Shady Grove, which had a bad reputation for causing trouble in the area.

They bullied the police force in the town so much that the only law enforcement official in town resigned. So, the mayor went looking for an honest person with a tough personality to come to Phil Campbell.

Lonnie Kent was 6 feet, 3 inches tall and weighed in at over 210 pounds. He had big hands and piercing eyes. His voice was kind of mellow, and he would have made a good baritone in the church choir. At least, his voice was mellow until he got excited. Then, the tone changed to a high pitch, and when he spoke, the sound was kind of like a squeal, squeaky and a little on the feminine side. He was a big and intimidating man until he got excited. But once he was excited, the sound of his voice made you want to laugh.

The Loughter boys showed up on the first Friday night after the new policeman had taken the oath of office. They were at the pool room trying to hustle people out of their money, and the alcohol had begun to take effect upon them. They became boisterous and loud. So, Mr. Steele called the new policeman. This was just what the boys wanted. They had been bragging that they would be teaching "Loonie" a lesson. So, when he showed up to calm the boys down, the youngest of the wild boys got his attention by calling him a bad name. The officer became angry, and his voice began to change into the high-pitched, cracking voice of a teenager. The Loughters began to laugh, which infuriated the officer even more. While his attention was on the youngest boy, the older one came from behind with a pool stick and knocked Loonie out cold.

While he was unconscious, the boys beat and kicked the policeman and left him lying in a pool of blood. The Loughters bragged to anyone which would listen that they had taught Loonie Kent a lesson. But they didn't know this man very well. He was carried down to Doc Underwood's place, where he recovered after three and a half weeks. As soon as he was able to walk, the officer went hunting. He drove over to Shady Grove and found two of the boys at a moonshine still. When apprehended, they were half drunk

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Agriculture and Football

I was very excited to write this article, because I get to write about two of my favorite things! College football and agriculture have a history together, and that can be seen in traditions and stories that many schools have. Since the beginning of the football season is almost upon us, I wanted to share some of the stories, and I'm sure there are many more, that I've heard over the years.

My dad has told me a story about when he was at the University of Alabama. There is a big grass field in the middle of campus called the Quad. On game days, there will be thousands of people tailgating there, and during the week, students like to use it for playing Frisbee and relaxing. The Quad is seeded with bermudagrass, so during the winter, the grass is brown and dormant. One year when he was there, someone went and over-seeded the grass with ryegrass, which is a cool season grass. Come November and a week before the Iron Bowl with Auburn, the bermudagrass was all brown and the ryegrass had turned green, spelling "War Eagle" in the middle of Tuscaloosa. Needless to say, the campus was in an uproar. The culprit was never caught, but it did get the football team fired up.

A lot of the schools in the SEC and ACC are land-grant universities, meaning that they have strong agriculture programs. Mississippi State University has the tradition of bringing cowbells to football games. In the mid-20th century, a Jersey cow wandered onto the field, and Mississippi State ultimately won the game, beginning the tradition of bringing cowbells to games. Virginia Tech's mascot started out as a live turkey in 1913 that was used to pull a cart around the stadium. Their use of a live turkey as a mascot continued into the 1950s. Auburn University has a tradition of rolling Toomer's Oaks after football victories. In 2010, the live oak trees were poisoned using an herbicide called Spike that contains a non-selective active ingredient called Tebuthiuron. The trees were poisoned after the Iron Bowl by an upset Alabama fan. Consequentially, the space has been replanted a couple of times to establish new trees there.

"Between the hedges" is a reference to the hedges encircling the field at Sanford Stadium at the University of Georgia. The hedges were originally planted in 1929. In 1996, the hedges were removed so that soccer could be played in the stadium for the 1996 Olympics. Around the same time, nematodes were found to be infesting the hedges, severely weakening the plants. Cuttings were taken from the hedges that were removed and grown into full-grown plants, which were

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Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West
Publisher/Owner

Shawn Jarrard
Editor

Derek Richards
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Sports Editor

Mark Smith
Staff Writer

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer

Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m. • Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - One Year \$40. 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. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.

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