

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### Learn CPR

One of the major goals of Union County Emergency Management is to make Union County a prepared and resilient community. A definition of a prepared and resilient community is a community that is aware of, prepared for, responds to, and recovers from emergencies and disasters that may affect them. There are many aspects to this goal, and it is a never-ending process. The bottom line is that the people of Union County and public safety are saving lives and property within our community. One thing that people can do is to learn CPR.

CPR, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation, is an important skill that everyone should know. One of the leading causes of death in the United States continues to be heart disease, which can lead to sudden cardiac arrest. Each year, over 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the United States. According to the American Heart Association, or AHA, 90 percent of people who suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrests die.

When a person has a cardiac arrest, survival depends on immediately getting CPR from someone nearby. CPR, especially if performed immediately, can double or triple a cardiac arrest victim's chance of survival. The chance of survival increases more when incorporating the use of an Automatic External Defibrillator with CPR.

If a person was to go into cardiac arrest near you, it can be stressful and shocking. Immediate action should be taken. CPR training teaches students how to recognize cardiac arrest and activate the emergency response system. This is the first step of the AHA's Chain of Survival.

The next step is early cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR, with an emphasis on chest compressions. Unfortunately, only about 46 percent of people who experience an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest get the immediate help that they need before professional help arrives. Most people want to help but are too intimidated to act due to lack of experience, the fear of doing something wrong, or fear of having to do mouth-to-mouth.

First, any help is better than no help. Learn the skill of CPR to be better prepared for these situations. Second, the likelihood of doing something wrong and causing a worse outcome is very low.

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**Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief**  
*David Dyer*



### A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens created Ebenezer Scrooge in his "ghostly little book" published in 1843. It was the first of his five holiday tales.

Because of his childhood, Dickens carried a burden for the less fortunate. This theme emerges in much of his work, including "A Christmas Carol." He only lightly alludes to the Nativity story when Nephew Fred says, "I have always thought of Christmas time -- apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin if anything belonging to it can be apart from that -- as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time." Even though he doesn't recite the gospel, the story certainly follows Christian themes.

For all his "Bah! Humbug!" Scrooge knew love. His little sister Fan's hugs and kisses when she fetched him from boarding school, and Nephew Fred's resolute "Merry Christmas!" wish to his uncle are evidence enough. His first boss Fezziwig had a love of life Scrooge found contagious. It was love that rescued him from the icy cold that gripped his heart. The Christian counterpart is that "God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:4-5).

Scrooge was "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner" per his creator. And we are per ours. "All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (Isa. 53:6). Yet Scrooge was not without hope. His deceased partner Marley came back to warn him, "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business!" Upon seeing his name on the tombstone, Scrooge exclaims, "Hear me! I am not the man I was. Why show me this, if I am past all hope?" As it was with Scrooge, our hope was realized on Christmas morning. "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

Scrooge repents of what he had done and of who he was. His "joie de vivre" was that of Zachaeus, immediate and tangible. Scrooge generously tipped for the prized goose he sent to poor Bob Cratchit. He made a generous contribution to the men he had insulted as they collected for the poor. He went to church.

See Fowler, page 5A

**All Things New**  
*Wayne Fowler*



### Commissioner's Questions

**Q. When should we call E-911?**

A. 911 is for emergencies only! An emergency is any situation that is beyond your control and requires immediate assistance from the police/sheriff, the fire department, or an ambulance.

**Q. If I am not sure or confused whether to call or not, will I get in trouble if I call the wrong number?**

A. If you are ever in doubt of whether a situation is an emergency, you should immediately go ahead and call 911. It is better to be safe and let the 911 dispatcher determine if you need emergency assistance. If you are trying to do what is correct, you will not get in any trouble.

**Q. When should 911 NOT be called?**

A. For general information, directory assistance, traffic tickets, animals, road conditions, weather conditions or pranks! If there is a non-emergency situation, you can call the non-emergency number of 706-439-6038.

**Q. If my child or I accidentally calls 911, what should we do?**

A. If you do accidentally call 911 without an emergency, please do NOT hang up. Tell the dispatcher your situation so they will know it was an accident and not an emergency. When the 911 operator receives a 911 hang up call, they have no way of knowing if it is a true emergency, or a false call. 911 operators call back the telephone number to see if there is an emergency, and they always will send an officer to the residence to confirm that everything is okay and taken care of. This can be a tremendous waste of manpower and our resources. So, if you accidentally call 911, please do not hang up, tell them it was an accident.

**Q. Do you have records of how many 911 calls you receive each year?**

A. Our E-911 Dispatch Center receives approximately 43,000 calls which are divided as follows: for the year 2017, 911 received 13,954 calls while the non-emergency received 28,964 calls. The current year total for 911 is 12,673 and non-emergency is 29,963.

**Q. How many dispatchers are on duty at any given time?**

A. Union County currently has two dispatchers on 24 hours

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**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**  
*Lamar Paris*



### Drug Free Mountain Life

#### What is Kratom?

Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) is a tropical evergreen tree from Southeast Asia and is native to Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Kratom, the original name used in Thailand, is a member of the Rubiaceae family. Other members of the Rubiaceae family include coffee and gardenia. The leaves of kratom are consumed either by chewing, or by drying and smoking, putting into capsules, tablets or extract, or by boiling into a tea.

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.

The effects of kratom are unique in that stimulation occurs at low doses and opioid-like depressant and euphoric effects occur at higher doses. Common uses include treatment of pain, to help prevent withdrawal from opiates (such as prescription narcotics or heroin), and for mild stimulation.

Traditionally, kratom leaves have been

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### Letters to the Editor

#### Socialism

Dear Editor,

We've been living under Socialism all our lives and always called it Democracy. Who knew? You know now. When tax dollars are used to pay for things, like a standing military, law enforcement, an educational system, roads and bridges. Tax money is used to subsidize farmers, airports, hospitals, and don't forget the money given to the big oil companies, General Motors, etc. So, maybe government uses taxpayer money for a lot of things we take for granted! Seems like when they do this in other countries, we call it Socialism. Looks to me like we've had it for years but call it by another name. Just saying.

Jim Morris  
Blairsville

#### Christmas in Heaven

Dear Editor,

Christmas is different to some of us if we allow it to be. Many of us will have loved ones who have gone before us, yet they have their place at our tables, our homes, and certainly in our memories and our hearts.

I am not thinking so much about missing them here, as I am thinking with wonder. What are they doing up there! I don't believe there is ever a time that they are wishing they were here with us at Christmas! They are having a Heavenly best Christmas ever.

We spend so much time hanging lights on our trees, our homes, wherever we find a place to hang lights. I picture Christmas in Heaven with Jesus, the Light of the World!

It is Christmas every day there, the Light that never goes out. There is no need to trim their tree in gold and green! They walk on streets of pure gold, with our Heavenly King, they are in perfect peace! Why should I fret and long for them to take their place here at our table, with gifts not only under our tree, but in the hearts of all those He loved, like you and me?

So, Happy Birthday World! From: Jesus and me, my husband, and "your" loved ones.

We are all anxious to meet you there, enjoy the Light in your Heaven one day. We will! By His grace!  
Irene Porter  
Suches

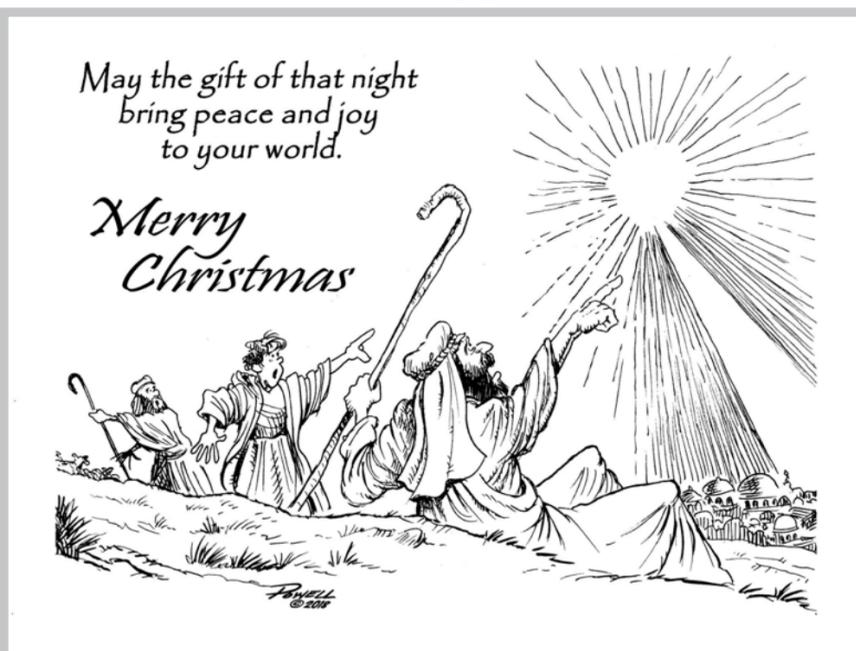
#### Merry Christmas

Dear Readers,

From our hearts to yours, the staff of the North Georgia News wishes everyone in Union County a very Merry Christmas!

We hope you have happy and healthy holidays here in the North Georgia Mountains.

NGN Family



### RC&D

#### International Assoc. of Wildland Fire

This week our Appalachian RC&D FAC Coalition is attending and exhibiting our wildfire education work at the "15th International Wildland Fire Safety Summit and 5th Human Dimensions Conference" at the Renaissance Hotel in Asheville, NC where it is cold with 14" of snow on the ground. Last week we were at Jeckyll Island attending and exhibiting the Georgia Farm Bureau convention where we experienced warm weather, heavy rain, and tornado warnings. We do get around with our work!

The conference is sponsored by The International Association of Wildland Fire an international wildland fire organization. We have met vendors and attendees from all over the world at the conference this week. Our Appalachian RC&D FAC Coalition team consists of 6 RC&Ds that cover from Northeast Georgia, through western North Carolina, and into Southern Virginia. This group of RC&Ds was created a couple of years ago from a request from the US Forest Service to duplicate the wildfire education work we developed in Towns county and spread it to communities up the Appalachian chain from Georgia to Virginia.

Our RC&D Coalition presented a panel discussion on the RC&D's Wildfire risk reduction work in the Appalachian Mountains to the largest audience during the week-long conference. We do know how to draw a crowd everywhere we go! We also seem to be the only people from this part of the country in attendance. Most attendees are from the western US, Germany, Australia, Portugal, England, and many other countries around the world where citizens live with the risk of wildfire. We are planning a fact-finding trip to visit the Australians to see how they deal with wildfire down under.

The International Association of Wildland Fire (IAWF) is uniquely positioned as an independent organization whose membership includes experts in all aspects of Wildland fire management. IAWF independence and breadth of global membership expertise allows it to offer a neutral forum for the consideration of important, at times controversial, Wildland fire issues. Their unique membership and organization allow the IAWF to creatively apply a full range of Wildland fire knowledge to perform its stated mission. Becoming a diverse and inclusive organization will enable the International Association of Wildland Fire to learn from others, grow their understanding, and find new ways to address,

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**RC&D Executive Director**  
*Frank Riley*



### Around The Farm

#### More Memories of Christmas

I have been blessed in my life to experience 60 different Christmas celebrations. As I look back through the years I can remember many special memories from Christmases past.

My first recollection of Christmas was in Chicago. My Daddy lost his job in Alabama and we had moved up North to find work. Our first Christmas there was miserable. I was homesick. I couldn't understand northern talking and they couldn't understand me. We were constantly referred to as hillbilly people. But, everything was made more bearable by a new pair of cowboy boots sent to me by my Uncle Bud a few days before Christmas in 1962.

In 1965 I was able to spend Christmas Break with my Grandparents in Alabama. I went squirrel hunting everyday with Papa. At night we would sit around the fire and listen to stories told by my grandparents. Granny told me about the bitter winters when my Daddy was little. She said, "In those days the mail carriers used wagons or horses to carry the mail". One particular day had been brutally cold. So, Granny heated up a big rock by the fireplace and wrapped it in a blanket. She then gave the rock to the mail man when he came by their house. He later said this rock was placed under his feet and it kept his feet from freezing on that cold day in 1940. This story continues to stand out in my memory as one of my favorite Christmas stories given to me by my Granny.

In 1973 Santa Claus brought me an Ithaca .410 gauge shotgun. As usual the family traveled to Alabama to spend Christmas with our family. I was in heaven that week. We hunted rabbits and squirrels in the day and coons at night. I spent every waking hour in the fields and woods during that Christmas break. But, I had a feeling gnawing at my gut that told me something was not right with my father. He had been acting different. Normally, my Dad was very outgoing and gregarious. Lately, he had been withdrawn. He acted as if something were worrying him. Prior to 1973 my father was known for hitting the bottle hard. He had a lightning fast temper and when he thought us kids weren't around he used profane language. My Dad only went to church a handful of times before 1973.

Christmas night of 1973 everything changed. My father accepted the man whose birthday we had just celebrated. My father's life style was changed in an instant. The temper, profanity and drinking were gone. This is the year

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**Around The Farm**  
*Mickey Cummings*



### Pesticide Safety

Pesticides can be a huge help in your garden and around the home if you choose to use them. They can help you manage pests in your garden, but what do you do with them when you're not using them? When used and stored properly pesticides can be a benefit around the home but if not used properly or stored well they can become a threat to you and the environment. Let's talk about how to properly store and use pesticides so that you can use them in a way that is beneficial.

The EPA describes a pesticide as, "Any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest." And so this is the definition that I am using for this article because the EPA regulates pesticides in the US.

The first thing to know about pesticide usage is that the label is the law. When you purchase a pesticide it will have a label on it that has been approved by the EPA. Companies spend a lot of money creating these labels because what is in there sets the legal limits on what you're allowed to do with a pesticide. If the label says that you can apply 2 oz per 1000 square feet, going over that is breaking the law. If the label says that the pesticide can be applied on only a certain species of plant you can't spray a species that is not on the label.

The label will also include safety information. This information will include on the required PPE (personal protective equipment). For most pesticides that you use around your house the label will probably require long sleeves and long pants to apply. Gloves, shoes, and socks will also be a good idea. This information is included for your own safety to reduce the chance of short term or long term effects of the pesticide on you.

If you use a sprayer for an application, triple rinse the sprayer out to clean the spray tank. This way if you use the sprayer again with a different pesticide the tank will be clean.

When storing pesticides keep them in a cool, dry place. The space should be ventilated and out of direct sunlight. Keep them out of reach of children and pets. Store the pesticides in their original containers. Never use food or drink containers for storing pesticides as this can lead to bad accidents. If you have used up all the pesticide in a bottle, triple rinse that bottle out and puncture it so that it won't be reused for a different purpose. Then throw the bottle in the trash.

The way that you clean up pesticide spills depends on if the pesticide is liquid or solid. For

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**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**  
*Steve Rowe*



### Chamber of Commerce

Merry Christmas from the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce! I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the community for coming out to enjoy Breakfast with Santa and the Tour of Trees. It's a tremendous honor for us to present this event to give back to the wonderful families in Union County. A special thank you to United Community Bank for partnering with us to put on a combined Breakfast with Santa and Holly Jolly event. And I'd also like to recognize Union General Hospital, Union General Wellness Center, and Kinetic by Windstream for sponsoring our annual Tour of Trees.

This year, we decided to give out several new awards, during the Tour of Trees. We wanted to recognize the tremendous time and effort put forth by the many businesses that participated in making the Union County Community Center a must-see gem for the month of December. In the People's Choice category, Lucretia

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