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a day, 365 days per year. There are times where an additional dispatcher is added on shift during special events or the threat of significant weather.

Q. What happens if many people call 911 at the same time?

A. This can happen often when there is a large fire or major car accident. There are only four 911 lines dedicated to 911. If there are many 911 calls at the same time and the lines are tied up, some calls will be rolled over to a 911 center in another county and then relayed back to Union County 911 center. All 911 calls will be answered as soon as possible.

Q. When I call 911, how do they know where I am?

A. Every landline telephone has an address assigned to it. When you call 911, the address is automatically brought up on the computers when the

dispatcher answers that call. Cell phones use a GPS locator to determine your location. The accuracy of this location depends on technology. It is a good idea to always be aware of your surroundings; do not always depend on technology to locate you because it can fail.

Our E-911 dispatchers are some of our most unsung county employee heroes. They work behind the scenes dispatching the thousands of calls to the proper source, whether that be the Hospital, Ambulance Service, Fire Department, Sheriff's Office, Blairsville Police, US Forest Service, Georgia State Patrol, Georgia Forestry Commission, Road Department, GEMA, GBI, EMA, Courthouse, etc. We appreciate our Dispatch staff and their dedication to the safety of Union County residents and visitors.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

everything changed in my family.

Christmas of 1980 was another special Christmas in my life. It is not the gift I received that made this year special to me. It is the gift I gave. It really was not even Christmas yet. But, it was sometime between Thanksgiving and Christmas. I presented Lauren with an engagement ring and she agreed to marry me the next summer. I will never forget that day as long as I live.

In the late 1980s and 1990s came the Christmas celebrations with my sons. Each one has been special. One year Wade received a LEGO pirate ship from Santa. That ship was comprised of more than 1,000 little pieces. Lauren helped him put the thing together and it took them all afternoon. When it was done he played with it about an hour and then took it apart.

One year Will asked for a pumper for Christmas. Lauren and I looked at every toy store trying to find a pumper. We could not find a person that knew about a pumper. Finally,

Lauren figured out that Will was referring to a pump for pumping up footballs and bicycle tires. And yes, Will received a pumper for Christmas.

Another good Christmas was the year we gave Sugar Bowl tickets to our son Will. We traveled to New Orleans to watch Georgia beat Hawaii in a very convincing manner. We were able to eat Dreamland BBQ in Birmingham and Crawfish at a great Cajun place in Louisiana. Later he graduated from UGA which was a dream come true for me.

Those little boys have grown into men and if the good Lord is willing we will make some new Christmas memories this year. Our youngest will be celebrating Christmas for the first time with his new spouse. He will remember this Christmas for a long time. But, the memory will be long lasting because of the people around him.

Please take the time this Christmas season to enjoy the people around you.

Riley... continued from Page 4A

understand and implement solutions to complex problems.

The IAWF desires to maintain a positive, empowering, inclusive and innovative culture that enables all members of the fire community to feel safe and valued when contributing to the IAWF. The IAWF wants to operate in a flexible and open manner to meet their membership's needs and to help members achieve their fullest potential.

The International Association of Wildland Fire (IAWF) mission is to facilitate communication and provide leadership for the Wildland fire community. The IAWF was formed to promote a better understanding of wildland fire and build on the belief that an understanding of this dynamic natural force is vital for natural resource management, for firefighter safety, and for harmonious interaction between people and their environment.

The Association is dedicated to communicating with the entire wildland fire community and providing global linkage for people with shared interest in wildland fire and comprehensive fire management.

The IAWF's vision is to be an acknowledged resource for local to global scale scientific and technical knowledge, education, networking and professional development that is depended on by members and partners in the international Wildland fire community. Wildland fire management encompasses a broad spectrum of

planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation activities designed to safely protect people, property, communities, societal infrastructure, and natural resources from detrimental effects of unwanted fires, to use fire where appropriate, to make all landscapes and human populations resilient to fire-related disturbances; and to accomplish stated objectives. It involves the application of ecologic, social, and physical science, risk-based decision-making, risk management, human performance, and community engagement for discovery of new knowledge and capabilities; strategic planning for prevention, suppression, prescribed fire, use of wildland fire; and tactical application of the full range of ground and aerial implementation practices.

All these meetings and conferences are learning experiences, interesting and fun, but after three weeks of on the road again I am ready to be back at home in Hiawassee. We learn a lot at these meetings, share a lot of information, and network with many people all of which makes our organization and message much stronger. The world is run by those who Show Up! And we do show up any chance we get to be seen by those who give out the funding.

For more information on the IAWF or other Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D programs, contact us at www.info.ccrecd@gmail.com.

Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

used by Thai and Malaysian natives and workers for centuries. The stimulant effect was used by workers in Southeast Asia to increase energy, stamina, and limit fatigue. However, some Southeast Asian countries now outlaw its use.

In the US, this herbal product has been used as an alternative agent for muscle pain relief, diarrhea, and as a treatment for opiate addiction and withdrawal. However, its safety and effectiveness for these conditions has not been clinically determined, and the FDA has raised serious concerns about toxicity and possible death with use of kratom.

The DEA states that drug abuse surveys have not monitored kratom use or abuse in the US, so its true demographic extent of use, abuse, addiction, or toxicity is not known. However, as reported by the DEA in 2016, there were 660 calls to U.S. poison centers related to kratom exposure from 2010 to 2015.

As published on February 6, 2018, the FDA notes it has no scientific data that would support the use of kratom for medical purposes. In addition, the FDA states that kratom should not be used as an alternative to prescription opioids, even if using it for opioid withdrawal symptoms. As noted by the FDA, approved prescription medications, including buprenorphine, methadone, and naltrexone, are available from a health care provider, to be

used in conjunction with counseling, for opioid withdrawal. Also, they state there are also safer, non-opioid options for the treatment of pain.

On February 20, 2018 the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported it was investigating a multistate outbreak of 28 salmonella infections in 20 states linked to kratom use. They noted that 11 people had been hospitalized with salmonella illness linked to kratom. Those who fell ill consumed kratom in pills, powder or tea, but no common distributors have been identified.

State laws have banned kratom use in several states including, Indiana, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Vermont, Arkansas, Alabama and the District of Columbia. These states classify kratom as a schedule I substance. Kratom is also noted as being banned in Sarasota County, Florida, San Diego County, California, and Denver, Colorado.

The FDA's analysis from February 2018 included 44 reported deaths associated with the use of kratom. According to Governing.com, legislation was considered last year in at least six other states — Florida, Kentucky, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York and North Carolina.

In November 2017 and February 2018, the FDA issued a public health advisory about deadly risks associated with kratom. There have been

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

Collins won for her amazingly decorated large tree display. Rustic Mountain Décor won the People's Choice for their rustically decorated small tree. North Georgia Technical College won for their Merry Christ-moose wreath and the Union County Middle School Nutrition Department won for their incredible gingerbread replica of the school. Awards in the Best Traditional category were given to Union General Hospital for their large tree, Union County Historical Society for their inspirational Tree of Hope, America's Home place for their beautiful wreath, and The View Grill for their whimsical gingerbread replica of the historic courthouse. The final category for which awards were given is the Most Creative category. Dixie Confexions was the award recipient in the large tree category for their unique tree decorated in edible sugar cookies displaying the logos of all the participating Tour of Trees businesses. The Most Creative small tree award went to Skin Care on the Square, The Wine Shoppe won for their artistic wreath, and Union Coun-

ty High School won for their gingerbread church complete with stained glass windows.

If you haven't taken time to see these beautifully festive displays, I'd encourage you to stop by the Community Center and support all the participating businesses. What wonderful community we live in for us to have such a joyous holiday presentation.

During this special time of year, while you and your family are participating in caroling, gift giving, and celebrations, we hope that each one of you will take time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and all the wonders of the holiday season.

From all of us at the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce we wish you a very Merry Christmas!

Dyer...

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Third, according to the AHA, Hands-Only (compressions only) CPR has been shown to be as effective as conventional CPR for cardiac arrest at home, at work or in public.

CPR is truly a lifesaving skill. It is extremely easy to learn and classes are available. Learning CPR can be one part that you can do to make Union County more prepared and resilient.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Williams...

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solids scoop the pesticide into heavy duty trash bag and triple bag it before putting it in the garbage. With liquids place and absorbent material like kitty litter on the wet spot and then scoop up the kitty litter and triple bag it and place it in the trash.

Whenever you're working with pesticides always take the time to read what's written on the label first. Remember that the label is the law. If you have questions about pesticides please contact your local Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Fowler...

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He restored his relationship with nephew Fred and wife. He gave Cratchit a raise. "And to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father." Indeed the Bible says, "Faith, if it has no works, is dead" (Jas. 2:17).

Keeping Christmas means love, hope, repentance, restoration, new life, all wonderful themes made possible by the coming of Christ in the little town of Bethlehem. May it be truly said of all of us that we keep Christmas well, "and so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless Us, Every One!"

44 reports of Kratom-related deaths, sometimes used in combination with other illicit drugs, prescription drugs, or over-the-counter agents such as loperamide (Imodium).

As with many herbal alternatives, designer drugs, or illicit products sold on the Internet, the possibility exists that kratom may also be

contaminated with illegal drugs, black market prescription medications, or even poisonous products. Consumers should avoid buying unknown drug products from the Internet. When combined with other drugs -- recreational, prescription, or alcohol -- the effects of kratom are unknown and may be dangerous.

UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Children's Story Time	Every Monday: Union County Library	11 a.m.
Civil Air Patrol	Blairsville Airport	6 p.m.
Boy Scouts #101	United Methodist Ch	7 p.m.
	Every Tuesday:	
Tri State Bus. Women	Cabin Coffee	8 a.m.
Tuesday Strippers	Mtn Presbyterian Ch	9:30-2:30
Smoky Mtn. Melodies	United Methodist Ch	6:30 p.m.
Hi Country Harmonizers	Branan Lodge	6:30 p.m.
	Every Wednesday:	
Kiwanis Club	The Griddle	Noon
BINGO	Civic Center	7 p.m.
	Every Thursday:	
Masonic Luncheon	Cook's Restaurant	11:30 a.m.
Rotary Club	NGTC	Noon
	Fourth Monday of each month:	
Blue Ridge Comm.	McCaysville Lodge	7:30 p.m.
	Fourth Tuesday of each month:	
Compassionate Friends	Grinds & Glazes	Noon
Dead Theologians Soc.	Cabin Coffee	Noon
Misty Mtn Quilt Guild	Blairsville UMC	12:30 p.m.
VFW Post #7394	Veteran's Center	6:30 p.m.
Eastern Star #304	Location not listed	7:30 p.m.
	Fourth Wednesday of each month:	
No activities listed		
	Fourth Thursday of each month:	
Cruisers Club Meeting	Sr. Center pavilion	6 p.m.
UT Homebuilders	YH College	7 p.m.
	Fourth Friday of each month	
Eastern Star #471	Location not listed	7:30 p.m.
	Fourth Saturday of each month:	
Youngcane Lodge #597	Lodge Hall	7:30 p.m.