

The Dispatcher

Most of the information that I write about has to do with the fire department, emergency management or the firefighters. This week, I wanted to give people a glimpse of the life of one of the most unsung heroes of public safety... the dispatcher.

A dispatcher's life is very similar to other public safety personnel; it is unusual. Dispatchers have a crazy work schedule and crazy hours as do all public safety. They have day shifts and night shifts. Each shift is 12 hours and there are several shifts per week. The day shift starts at 6 a.m. and ends at 6 p.m. The night shift starts at 6 p.m. and ends at 6 a.m. Night shifts are tough for everyone.

If you think the schedule is stressful, you should see the actual work. The dispatch center is considered the central hub for all communications and information for public safety. That includes local public works, emergency management, ambulance, fire, sheriff, and police. They also deal with state and federal agencies as well as the private sector and of course, the public.

When a person first walks into the dispatch center, one of the first things that they notice are the six monitors at each dispatch station. Each monitor provides different information that the dispatcher uses to locate callers, dispatch calls, search for information and track the responding units. A misconception about the dispatcher is that they are just waiting on a call. However, there is very little down time. For the most part, they are constantly talking on the radio; dispatching calls; providing or collecting information; making phone calls... the list goes on.

One motor vehicle accident, for example, can result in several 911 calls at one time. The dispatcher must collect the information and dispatch the appropriate units which may include law enforcement, fire and rescue, ambulance, GSP, and wrecker services. The dispatchers also have to track times for all units and run driver's information through data bases. This all happens within a few minutes and the dispatcher must remain calm during all these stressful moments. One of the hardest parts for some dispatch-

See Dyer, page 5A

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Mister Rogers

What TV personality walks into the house, removes his jacket and dons a colorful cardigan, then puts on his sneakers, all while singing a song? Of course it's Mister Rogers. Fred McFeeley Rogers didn't create a character for TV. He believed children could spot a phony, so he was just himself. "One of the greatest gifts you can give anybody is the gift of your honest self," he said.

Rogers said, "I went into television because I hated it so, and I thought there's some way of using this fabulous instrument to nurture those who would watch and listen." TV still needs the spirit of Fred Rogers. We lost this cultural icon in 2003. He began in TV in 1951 and produced almost 900 episodes of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" during 1963-2001.

Rogers graduated from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1963. After ordination by the Presbyterian Church, his ministry was to children and families through mass media. That year, he accepted an offer from Canada to begin his children's program. In 1966, he moved the program to the U.S.

He based his show on the deeply Christian themes of neighbor, love, and acceptance. His goal was to make children feel valuable and loved, and to help them cope with simply growing up, and the complexities of life with grownups.

Jesus spoke on neighborliness with a story about the Good Samaritan (Luke 10). His challenge is to be a neighbor especially to those in need. Rogers appealed to the human need to belong, to be part of a community, at the beginning of each episode. "It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood, a beautiful day for a neighbor. Would you be mine? I've always wanted to have a neighbor just like you," he sang.

Jesus said that the greatest commandments are to love God, and to love your neighbor (Matt. 22:36-40). He demonstrated love and acceptance while calling people to faith and holiness. Rogers thought about love this way: "Love isn't a state of perfect caring. It is an active noun like struggle. To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. We continue to see a lot of trash and trash bags on the side of the highway. Can the county not do anything about this? It is ruining the beauty of our county.

A. I can assure you that NO ONE is more frustrated with the continued littering that is happening in our county than me. I hate to waste taxpayer money on picking up litter that has no business being on the side of the road in the first place. Conservatively, we are spending around \$50,000 per year just to pick up roadside litter.

Q. What is causing the litter and who is doing it?

A. Not all littering is malicious or done intentionally, but never the less it is happening. We are in the process of narrowing it down to where it comes from exactly. Below are some of the places we know it is coming from.

1 - Commercial Haulers either do not have their loads covered or once dumping at the Transfer Station, they do not clean out the truck. As soon as they pull out on to Deep South Farm Road the left-over trash and paper starts blowing out.

2 - Trash is blowing out the back of pickup trucks. We probably have more pickup trucks in the county per capita than most counties. We know that much of the trash is coming from construction sites or from just around people's homes. Guys will throw an empty pack of cigarettes, fast food bags, or empty grocery bags in the back of their pickups to keep from throwing it on the ground (which is good) either on the job site or at home. But while not intending for it to blow out, they then hit the highway and with speed it blows out the back of the pickup. When they get back, they often do not think about it again until the process is repeated over and over again. This is not to say that all or even most pickup drivers do this, but it is a significant number.

3 - Full trash bags are blowing off of trailers, commercial haulers and pickups. Often, they hit the highway and break apart or the next car hits them. In just a couple of hours that one bag is scattered all up and down the highway. We have an ordinance that requires that your load be tarped or covered if you are hauling

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Athel

Athel was a first cousin to my MawMaw Adams, and she was my mother's best friend.

Athel was the type of person that made something positive out of a tragedy filled life. Athel's mother was Malvie Motes. Malvie was a

younger sister of my great grandmother Alvie. As a young girl Malvie fell in love with a fellow who would become a preacher.

Everyone thought that Malvie and Tom made quite the couple. Young Tom was an aspiring preacher and Malvie was a person that trusted everyone. After a few months of marriage young Tom was soon tempted by another woman and left a young and expecting Malvie. Soon Malvie gave birth to a beautiful little girl she named Athel. Even from a young age Athel was a hit with the family. She was beautiful, caring and mature for her age.

People would tell Malvie that her estranged husband was seeing other women. But, she always said, "Tom loves me and someday he'll come home". A few years passed and Malvie became deathly sick. While she was lying on her death bed Tom came to see her. Tom explained that he had some papers she needed to sign. He further explained that the papers would allow him to sell their present house and then "we could get a bigger one". Malvie just knew that Tom Clark had come to his senses and was going to take care of Athel. So, Malvie signed the papers which turned out to be divorce documents. So, upon her mother's death Athel was left without a mother, father or any means of support or money. Tom Clark never did anything to support his daughter.

Athel was taken in by her Aunt Alvie and Uncle Charlie Baker. These were the grandparents to my mother. Mom said, "I always enjoyed visiting my grandparents because Athel was living with them. She was 10 years older than me and would take me for walks. On a particular walk I got stuck in a mud hole causing my shoes to come off. Ethel pulled me out and retrieved my shoes. Then she cleaned them off with her sweater. I can remember walking by Dad Baker's (Charlie) apple tree. Dad always told his grandkids to stay away from his apples". So, one day as a little girl, Mom and Athel were walking by the tree and Mom decided she wanted an apple. Dad knew she wasn't supposed to steal one of Dad's apples, but she disregarded Dad's rule and took the apple and gave it to her younger cousin. Mom bit into the apple and was thoroughly enjoying it when her grandfather, Dad Baker walked up. Imagine a little girl looking up at her bigger than life grandfather all the while

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



"Adults are hard to understand. My Mom wouldn't let me get away with only cleaning my room once a year!"

Letters to the Editor...

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. You can help.

Dear Editor,

As the first full week of Child Abuse Prevention Month passes, we're sharing the ways people can get involved to prevent child abuse in our communities. One way you can have an impact is to be knowledgeable about the signs of child abuse and what you can do to intervene safely and get help on behalf of another child.

Know the signs of child abuse and neglect. We know child abuse and neglect happens in our communities. In fact, there were 217 abused/neglected children in the Enotah Judicial Circuit. There are different warning signs for different kinds of abuse and neglect. However, there are some indicators that can signal abuse in any form. Some of the major signs are when a child:

Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance; Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention; Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen; Lacks adult supervision; and Appears afraid or hesitant to go home after school.

It's very important to note that none of these signs prove that child abuse is happening. Any one of these indicators can be found in any parent or child at one time or another. However, when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination, that is a good time to take a second look.

What can I do if I think a child is being

See Child Abuse, page 5A

Social Security

Dear Editor,

Remember, not only did you and I contribute to Social Security but your employer did, too, which totaled 15% of your income before taxes.

If you averaged only \$30k over your working life, that's close to \$220,500.

Read that again.

Did you see where the Government paid in one, single penny? We're talking about the money that you and your employer put into a Government "bank" to ensure you and me that we would have a retirement check from the money that we "contributed."

Why do our "representatives" to the Congress refer to the money that we put in as an "entitlement"?

If you calculate the future value of \$4,500 per year, based on flat income of \$30k — yours and your employer's contribution — that money, invested at a simple 5% interest (which is less than the Government pays on money that it borrows), after 49 years of working, you'd have accumulated \$892,919.98.

Read that again.

If you took out only 3% per year, you'd receive \$26,787.60 per year — if you retired at 65, it would last better than 30 years — and

See Mitchell, page 5A

The Sky is Falling

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank Ms. Brumit for her response to my letter last week, however, I must point out a couple of things.

First, I didn't mention climate change which is probably the most important issue of all. It's not necessary to believe in climate change - it's not a religion so belief is not necessary - all you need to do is study the science. Unfortunately, President Trump doesn't believe in science at all so he has stopped all efforts to combat climate change and unfortunately, again we are at a tipping point where if we don't act now it may be too late. If all the land ice melts, which it could over the next century if we take no action now, sea level could rise between 250 and 300 feet. This would mean virtually all of Florida would be gone along with New Orleans, New York, Charleston and most of our sea coast cities. We should all buy future ocean front land below Dublin, GA.

The other thing is your concern about abortion. While I agree this is a very poor method of birth control, I'm not a woman so it could never affect me directly so it is none of my business. Trump claims to be pro-life but when he was married to his first wife he got Marla Maples his future second wife pregnant and strongly encouraged her to have an abortion, she refused so I would question his true feelings! He married Marla a month after Tiffany Trump was born.

Luther Elder

Health Care

Dear Editor,

The political rhetoric regarding health has changed from Repeal Obamacare to repeal and replace. The first attempt to replace by the Trump administration went down even before a vote was cast. He initially threatened to walk away like it was a bad hotel, now there is a new plan to try to replace the ACA. The problem is Paul Ryan and his fellow House of Representatives friends are opposed to any role for government in healthcare. They voted repeatedly over the last seven years to repeal the ACA. They would like to cut Medicaid and they have their eyes on Social Security and Medicare.

These people full of anti-regulation zeal and ideological purity are not looking out for us. What they have accomplished is to undermine parts of the ACA and spread enough chaos and uncertainty that insurers will avoid the exchanges.

Health care is about one sixth of our economy. Insurance is cheaper when the pool is large. The first year or so a previously uninsured person is covered is expensive. Health screenings and treatment for conditions they might have been trying to "live with" can be costly, but in the long run save money. Better treatment, fewer expensive ER visits and better compliance

See Compton, page 5A

The State of Tourism in Blairsville-Union County: Part 2

In 2016 the Tourism Division of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce began the implementation of the Community Rebranding project. A well-rounded and detailed plan was designed and ready for execution. There are many parts and pieces that go into rebranding a community. Internally, all of our literature and collateral needed to be updated. Some of these include nametags, business cards, signature tags and promotional pieces like t-shirts, hats, and pens. We also updated the Visitor's Guide and post cards that are sent out to all of the Welcome Centers around the state, other Chambers, and to leads that we receive from advertising.

Externally, there was a mandatory refresh of our website. From color scheme to layout and verbiage, an overhaul was completed in early May.

See Chandler, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber Tourism Director
Tobie Chandler



Tent Caterpillars and other pests

Many of you may have noticed large webworms forming on tree branches in your yard and along roads. These are not the work of some enormous mystery spider, but a type of insect called tent caterpillars. These critters are the larvae of a type

of moth and hatch in early spring. Tent caterpillars produce silk from their salivary glands in their mouths, and they use this silk to create the protective "tents" we see in the trees right now. While these insects do not kill the trees in which they live, many people find the nests unsightly, and the caterpillars can strip branches of their leaves.

There are two main varieties of tent caterpillars that we will find in our area: the forest tent caterpillar and the eastern tent caterpillar. The nests of these two larvae are very difficult to tell apart as they both tend to inhabit the crotches of trees, but their markings make it easy to distinguish them from each other. The eastern tent caterpillar has a broad white stripe bordered by two thin yellow stripes extending down the length of its back. The forest tent caterpillar looks similar but instead of a stripe, it has white and black spots along its back. Both caterpillars are mostly blue-gray and covered with thin hairs. There is only one generation of these pests every year, so you will only see their nests form in the early spring.

Another common tent-forming pest is the fall webworm which is typically a problem later in the summer. Webworms create their silken nests at the ends of branches instead of at branch unions, often killing all of the leaves and new growth within the nest. The larvae have long, thin hairs and have two rows of black spots extending down their backs. Unlike tent caterpillars, webworms have multiple generations throughout the year and can do much more damage.

If you have a tree that has become home to some of these pests, the first course of action is to remove the affected branches. Manual removal should always be your first course of action, but if the nest is out of reach or on a major branch that cannot be removed, pesticides may be required. If possible, damage the nest and crush what caterpillars you can before spraying to make the nest as vulnerable as possible to the insecticide. The silk of these tents is so tightly woven that it can be difficult for sprays to penetrate, so opening the webs will help ensure the pesticide comes into contact with the caterpillars. Carbaryl and acephate are two solutions that have been proven effective not only against both varieties of tent caterpillars, but also fall webworm and other pests such as bagworm moths.

Though tent caterpillars and webworms seldom cause enough damage to completely kill a tree, they do feed on the leaves and cause a

See Mattee, page 5A

From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West
Owner/Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Website: www.nganews.com

E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com

Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

Derek Richards
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Staff Writer

Shawn Jarrard
Staff Writer

Lily Avery
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 - 1 Year \$35.00. 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.

Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514