

# Opinions

# Everybody has one...

## Carbon Monoxide

Most people are familiar with smoke alarms and how they can save lives. Smoke alarms are placed in homes to detect smoke which can give the occupants more time to safety exit the home. Smoke is a byproduct of fire and can be discovered by smoke alarms, it can be seen or a person can smell it. Carbon monoxide (CO), on the other hand, is called the "Invisible Killer" because it's a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas that can only be detected by a CO monitor. The CO monitor can be a lifesaving alarm as well. Union County Fire Department would like to provide some information on CO and encourage people to install CO monitors.

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



Carbon Monoxide is produced by the incomplete burning of various fuels including wood, charcoal, oil, kerosene, propane, and natural gas. According to the CDC, CO "is found in fumes produced any time you burn fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, or furnaces. CO can build up indoors and poison people and animals who breathe it." CO can be very dangerous and can affect everyone in the home of building.

There are several tips to prevent CO poisoning. People should have their heating system, water heater, and any other gas appliances inspected or serviced by a qualified technician. Chimneys should be inspected and/or cleaned every year. People should never use outdoor appliances such as charcoal grills, portable gas camp stoves, or generators inside the home, basement, or garage.

The best practice is to have a CO monitor in your home to detect the CO levels before levels rise affecting the health of the occupants. People exposed to CO will start to present with certain signs and symptoms. These signs and symptoms begin with: headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, and dizziness. Higher levels of CO or prolonged exposure produce signs and symptoms of mental confusion, vomiting, loss of coordination, and loss of consciousness. If not treated, CO poisoning can lead to death. A tale-tale sign is that more than one person in the home may have the same signs and symptoms.

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## Last Chance

It was an awkward encounter. Anyone who carries the name and message of Christ will likely have similar stories. Since our worldview encompasses eternity, we are willing to take risks to change eternal outcomes.

Someone suggested I visit an elderly couple I didn't know. As I approached their front door one evening, I wondered how I would explain what I was doing there. The door opened just wide enough for me to see the wife's face, kind, but a bit apprehensive. I introduced myself and a couple of friends and mentioned our church. I said simply that a mutual friend asked us to stop by for a brief visit. "It's really not a good time," she said. A polite brush-off, which I respected. The door creaked, closing.

A faceless male voice called from the interior, "Who is it?" The creaking paused. "People from a church." "Well let them in!" The man was resting in a wheelchair, clearly not in good health, and perhaps hoping we could cheer him up a little.

Settling into the parlor, we tried polite conversation with little success. I ditched the trivialities. "Do you mind if I ask you a personal question about God?" He consented. "If you were to die and stand before God, and if He asked you, 'Why should I let you into my heaven?' what would you say?" He raised his eyebrows as he pondered. "Well, I've tried to live a good life. I haven't been able to go to church since I've been sick."

I began to explain some truth claims from the Bible, beginning with, "The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Nothing wrong with trying to live a good life or attending church, but they are not enough. Sadly, despite our best efforts, we have all sinned and fallen short of God's moral standard, which is perfection. As a just God, He has said that "the wages of sin is death." Such is the human condition.

But God, not content to leave us to our fate, "demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus takes our punishment and gives us the righteousness of God. This is where faith comes in. "By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Faith receives what God gives. (Rom. 1:16-17, 5:8)

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**All Things New**

*Wayne Fowler*



## Commissioner's Questions

I received information from the Georgia Department of Transportation to assist in answering these questions.

**Q. What is GDOT doing at the intersection of Hwy 515 and Jack Lance Memorial Highway (US 19/129)?**

A. Any major intersection is supposed to have pedestrian and bicycle access lanes and lights. GDOT is upgrading and replacing the signal equipment. These intersections are part of a much larger project that is upgrading the signals at 19 intersections in 4 counties in North Georgia. This is part of an overall effort to upgrade signal equipment statewide. The Federal Highway Administration provided funding to assist with this intersection improvement, including under paving sensors. They are installing crosswalks and handicap accessible curbed traffic islands. Crosswalks require an access button for pedestrian, handicapped and even blind use. In addition, an audible signal is utilized to assist notification to pedestrians. This is occurring at three intersections along Highway 515.

**Q. If the traffic signals have worked well in the past, why is it necessary to replace them now since they appear to be working properly?**

A. Signal equipment is just like anything else that is exposed to the elements - it has to be upgraded and replaced periodically. A signal controller is essentially just a computer that is located in a metal box that is exposed to the heat & cold, rain & snow, etc. Eventually, it reaches the end of a useful life and must be replaced. Same goes for the signal heads, poles, wiring - everything that makes a signal function is in a pretty hostile environment.

**Q. Since there are no sidewalks at this intersection, does it make sense to spend all this money?**

A. While we normally would not consider walking across this intersection, what if your vehicle broke down, or there is an auto accident, hitch hiking for some reason, or occasional joggers, if there is not some mechanism to stop traffic, you could be in a mess when needing to cross this intersection in some way other than a vehicle.

**Q. Are there other operational reasons for the new intersection upgrades?**

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**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**

*Lamar Paris*



## The Naloxone - A Life Saving Drug

Naloxone (also known as Narcan) is a prescription medicine that reverses an opioid overdose that can be caused by heroin or prescriptions such as Percocet or OxyContin. Naloxone will only reverse an opioid overdose. It restores the over-dose victim's breathing, which can slow or stop hours after taking drugs. It does not prevent deaths caused by other drugs such as benzodiazepines, bath salts, cocaine, methamphetamine or alcohol. However, naloxone may also be effective for an overdose from multiple substances, such as a combined opioid and alcohol overdose. It cannot be used to get high and it is not addictive. Naloxone is safe and effective and emergency professionals have used it for decades.

*The mission of the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition is to support an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.*

If a bystander notices that person's breathing has slowed, stopped, or an overdose is suspected, naloxone can act as bridge between the call to 911 and when help arrives to keep the person breathing. The number one sign of an overdose is the victim being unresponsive. They may be turning blue, making deep snoring or gasping and gurgling sounds and have a slow heartbeat or pulse.

If someone is found in this condition, rub your fist up and down their chest along the sternum. If this does not wake them up, call 911. Tell the 911 operator the person appears to be unconscious and not breathing. Clearly give the address of the overdose. Next, give rescue breathing by tilting their head back slightly, pinch their nose, and give 1 breath by mouth every 5 seconds.

If the caller has naloxone it should be prepared in-between breaths and then injected straight into a muscle (upper arm, butt or thigh). In an emergency, it is safe to inject through clothing. There is also a naloxone for nasal use that is put on a syringe then placed into the nostril. Intranasal naloxone has not been approved by the FDA, but can be legally prescribed by a medical provider or approved pharmacists. First responders often give naloxone intranasally.

Naloxone acts in 2-5 minutes. If the person doesn't wake up in 5 minutes, they should be given a second dose. Rescue breathing should be done while you wait for the naloxone to take effect so that the person gets oxygen to their brain. Oxygen is the key to survival for someone experiencing an overdose or overmedication.

In 2014, Governor Nathan Deal signed The 911 Amnesty and Naloxone Access Law. This law protects you when you call 911 to help at an alcohol or drug overdose scene. The law states that the caller and victim cannot be arrested, charged or prosecuted when you call 911 for

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**Drive Safely...**

**They are depending on you.**

## Cherokee Foothills

The United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) entered into a multi-year partnership a couple of years ago, called the Two Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, to improve the health and resiliency of forest ecosystems where public and private lands meet across the nation, or as we call it the Wildland Urban Interface. Now in its second year, this unique partnership is working across traditional barriers to ensure more efficient and effective conservation work in these vital landscapes.

NRCS and USFS will invest \$10 million this year in 15 new projects to improve conditions on public and private lands. Last year, NRCS and USFS invested \$30 million in 13 projects, which will result in conservation improvements to over 266,000 acres. These projects build on existing projects and partnerships and by leveraging technical and financial resources and coordinating activities on adjacent public and private lands and conservation work by NRCS and USFS will be more efficient and effective in these watersheds.

In late 2015 a partnership was organized in Northeast Georgia and Northwest South Carolina to develop a proposal for the Two Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership. The partnership was made up of NRCS, USFS, GFC, SFC, plus Nature Conservancy, and ChestChatt RC&D. The proposal was named the Cherokee Foothills Fire Adapted Landscape Restoration Project (CFFALRP) and is the result of multiple federal, state and non-governmental partners working together in a collaborative across Northeast Georgia and Northwestern South Carolina in an area around the national forest lands in the area.

The purpose of the CFFALRP is to help reduce hazardous fuels while promoting native species restoration on a fire-adapted landscape. The project will focus on expanding the capacity within the landscape to restore forest health and reduce fuel loads; improve habitat for at-risk species; and create educational and outreach programs and management plans for private landowners. The Cherokee Foothills LRP targets the area across Northeast Georgia and Northwestern South Carolina where many communities are in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and are in need of mitigation, fuel reduction, and wildfire education efforts that the LRP could provide. All of the organizations involved have the same goal and mission and that is to enhance and preserve the natural resources for present and future generations and keep citizens safe from uncontrolled wildfires. The CFFALRP project area was defined using a landscape-scale approach, where the project boundary was delineated using a 10-mile buffer around the Chattahoochee National Forest in Geor-

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**Frank Riley**

*Executive Director of RC&D*



## What's in a Name?

Traipsing around these mountains leaves me with many questions about the places I visit. How did the name of a place come about? Why did a person think of naming a place in the way it was named? Some places are evident for the name they are called. However some leave me wondering?

For example, looking to the northwest while walking off Bald Mountain on the Rocky Lead you can see a cove cutting into the side of a high ridge. The creek cutting through the cove is called Cross Mountain Branch. The creek appears to be flowing up and across the ridge, hence the name, "Cross Mountain Branch". The branch appears to be flowing up and across the ridge.

Another interesting place name is "Lord A Mercy Cove" which can be found on the left side of Highway 180 while traveling south toward Tesnatee Gap on the Richard Russell Road. At this point the present road parallels the old Logan Turnpike. I have been told by people that the first folks that came here in a car across the turnpike exclaimed "Lord A Mercy" when they first viewed the cove from Tesnatee Gap.

Forest Service Road 100 travels along the spine of Ivy Log Mountain before turning northward. If you drive down this road you will pass through places like Jenkins Gap (named for an ancestor of the Jenkins family), Flint Gap, Sharp Gap and Chestnut Flats. I can guess that Sharp Gap was named due to the fact that it looks as if someone cut a slice out of the mountain. The incline from the ridge top into this gap is very sharp. I am sure Chestnut Flats was named for the many Chestnut Trees which must have occupied the place at one time. And I really don't know about Flint Gap.

Down in Choestoe close to Pine Top Church is a place called the Mitchell Fields. Jerry Dyer took me to this old farmstead where you can still see the foundation of an old Spring House and other outbuildings. As I stood there looking across an area that was once fields of corn and collards I wondered about the Mitchell Family that once called this place home.

Traveling through Owl Town if you have the gumption you can walk up to a ridge line on Forest Service property where you will almost stumble upon the remnants of an old fort. There are many Fort Mountains around north Georgia. On this particular mountain you can still see the foundations of a walled in area that appears to have been a fort. I have heard many theories about why this fort was built. People have told me it was built by Spaniards to protect them from attacks by either the English or Cherokee. However, I like to think it was built by the Cherokee to protect their villages from the giant bird that once terrorized the local people. This bird swooped down from the high ridges and took away unsuspecting children. Legend

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**Around The Farm**

*Mickey Cummings*



## Commissioner Chris Carr of the Georgia Department of Economic Development

The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce proudly presents our 2016 August Power Lunch. The event will be held at the Union County Community Center on Tuesday, August 16th from 11:45 AM to 1 PM. Our Keynote Speaker for this year's event will be Commissioner Chris Carr of the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

Commissioner Carr joined the agency in November 2013. As Commissioner, he leads the state agency responsible for creating jobs and investment in Georgia through business recruitment and expansion, international trade and

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**Blairsville - Union County Chamber**

*Regina Allison*



## Black Knot

If you are beginning to see black masses in the branches of your plum and cherry trees, it is very likely that you have a black knot infection. This disease is caused by a fungus that infects a wide variety of Prunus trees, both fruit bearing and ornamental. In addition to the unsightly black galls it forms, this fungus can cause bark along the trunk to crack and ooze sap, leaving a wound through which other diseases may enter the tree and eventually kill it. However, with proper management and prevention, a minor black knot infection will have little to no effect on your trees.

Outbreaks of black knot are common in both natural areas and landscapes that are not protected with fungicides. The fungus overwinters in the large black galls that it forms. As temperatures increase and the first spring and summer rains occur, the fungus produces spores that are spread on the wind to other branches and often, other susceptible trees in the area. Once the spores land on new shoots of plum and cherry trees, the fungus starts to grow between individual plant cells. Because the spores are so small, they cannot be seen with the naked eye. Instead, the only way you know if a tree is infected is when the growing fungi releases chemicals that cause the wood of the tree to grow abnormally and create large, irregular masses. Some of this growth is also mature fungi which turns the wood black.

Many times, a gall will completely encircle a branch. When this happens, the leaves beyond the gall wilt and die. In some cases the entire branch dies, which also kills the gall. However, if the branch survives to the next year, the gall will also grow and produce more spores to infect new tissue and continue to do so as long as the branch is alive.

The best ways to prevent losing plum and cherry trees to black knot are to remove any infection sources and prevent it from happening in the first place. The infection does not move throughout the tree tissue like other diseases. Instead, it is isolated to the individual galls, which only infect other trees or part of the same tree under certain conditions. With mild cases, pruning out affected limbs at least four inches from the gall has proven highly successful. Sometimes, though, the trunk itself becomes infected which can cause the tree to become structurally unsound. Once the trunk forms galls and starts oozing sap, it is often too late to save the tree.

There are several ways to prevent your trees from contracting black knot. First, be very careful in your site selection. If there are a lot of infected wild Prunus species around, avoid planting susceptible cultivated varieties. There are several resistant varieties available for purchase and are good alternatives. Second, always

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**From the Ground Up**

*Melissa Mattee*



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