

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Halloween Safety

Many people love Halloween. They love the costumes, the candy, the parties and the occasional scare. Halloween can be fun for people of all ages, but it can also be dangerous.

According to National Safety Council Injury Facts, 7,330 pedestrians died in traffic or non-traffic incidents in 2016. Non-traffic incidents include those occurring on driveways, in parking lots or on private property. Halloween is a prime time for these types of accidents. Here are a few safety tips for your Trick-or-Treat adventures.

Costumes can be the best part of Halloween, but they can also increase the danger.

Trick-or-Treaters should avoid costumes or masks which can obstruct their vision. These may prevent them from seeing where they are walking or oncoming traffic when crossing the street. If children are allowed out after dark, fasten reflective tape to their costumes and bags, or give them glow sticks. Glow sticks are more fun for the kids and more visible to motorists.

If Trick-or-Treaters are walking, a responsible adult should accompany young children on the neighborhood rounds. If your older children are going alone, plan a route acceptable to you and agree on a specific time they should return home. Instruct children to travel only in familiar, well-lit areas and stick with their friends.

Children and adults are reminded to put electronic devices down, keep heads up and walk, don't run, across the street.

If you are traveling by car to your favorite candy-rich areas, motorist should watch for children walking on roadways, medians and curbs.

Drivers should enter and exit driveways carefully and watch for children in dark clothing. We know that everyone wants to get in and out of the car quickly, but don't forget to use your seat belts.

These are a few Trick-or-Treat tips for you and your family. We want everyone to have a safe and fun Halloween. Union County Fire Department reminds everyone to drive carefully, be visible and be safe.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



The Problem

Most of us would not have a job if there were no problems to fix. Teachers fix ignorance. Mechanics fix cars. Carpenters fix houses. Doctors fix bodies. At least they all try, and we appreciate them for it. Have you ever pondered what the world's ultimate problem is, and what the solution might be?

Leslie Stevenson's book "Seven Theories of Human Nature" explores that topic and the thinkers that influence Western civilization. Plato thought the problem was the weakness of the physical body. Physical and mental discipline would improve humanity. Karl Marx believed the problem was capitalism's self-defeating contradictions that would lead to widespread socialism. His solution was for workers to arise and implement a state-controlled economy.

Sigmund Freud counseled that the problem is the inner conflict between desire and conscience. He wanted to minimize the influence of morality advocates. Philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre saw moral restraint as the problem. His solution was to avoid holding objective values.

Psychologist B.F. Skinner believed we are completely determined by our environment and we have no free will. He used behavior analysis and conditioning to improve outcomes. Konrad Lorenz was a medical doctor and scientist that studied animal behavior. He found that the problem is our innate evolutionary aggression, corrected best with positive feedback.

Notice the contradictions. The problem is either human weakness, economics, inner conflict, morality, environment, or evolution. It's amazing that Western civilization advanced despite these discordant voices and their divergent diagnoses.

Stevenson thinks they all miss the point. He writes, "If God has made man for fellowship with Himself, and if man has turned away and broken his relationship to God, then only God can forgive man and restore the relationship." John's gospel says we are created, but suffer with spiritual darkness. God's solution is to shine the Light of Christ, so that "as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe" (1:12).

Tim Keller says it this way: "The biblical worldview

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All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. I am still confused about the air ambulance (medical emergency helicopter) service in our county. We keep getting literature in the mail about AirMedCare/Life Force. If we are personally already covered in Union County for emergency helicopter service, why do we keep getting literature in the mail trying to sell us on another service?

A. Join the crowd about being confused. While I have addressed this issue in this column before, the following questions will all be pertaining to this service and the advertisements and trying to simplify it somewhat.

Q. I have received two advertising flyers in the mail recently from AirMedCare wanting to sell us a "Life Force membership." Who is this, and is it not the same medical emergency helicopter service we already have in Union County?

A. It is NOT the same service we have in Union County. The Union General Helicopter is owned and operated by Air Methods/AirLife. I really regret that the other company is flooding our county with these brochures. While their company is nationwide, which is the same as ours, the service they are advertising for is based out of Blue Ridge and primarily serves Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Q. Is there any reason we need to pay for a "membership" with AirMedCare?

A. The odds of you needing the service is very slim, but it is still possible. First, we hope none of you ever need a medical emergency helicopter service. However, the only reason you would ever need their service is if the Union General helicopter were on a call or out of service and it was determined that your injury was life threatening and could not wait. This does happen but it is very seldom. It certainly would be up to each person to make their own determination.

Q. Does the Union County helicopter service and the Fannin County service work together?

A. We are fortunate that there are two emergency medical helicopter services close by. Union General Hospital's Air Methods/AirLife helicopter is located just outside the entrance to the Emergency Room at Union General Hospital in Blairsville.

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Drug Free Mountain Life

Hiring Drug-Free Job Applicants

The crisis of addiction in the U.S. is at a record-breaking high, and America's drug epidemic has infiltrated the workforce. It is important, then, for supervisors to recognize the signs of substance abuse and to address them accordingly. But first, every effort should be made to avoid hiring problem employees from the beginning.

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 success of a company stands or falls on its human resources. Therefore, all employees must be properly screened, tested, and hired; effectively trained; and then wisely managed.

When a company announces position openings, the business might receive résumés that contain great references, impressive work histories, and amazing accomplishments. But the one most important reference that cannot be altered by an advanced degree, work experience, and a charming personality is the presence of a

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Letters to the Editor

Miracle Man

Dear Editor,

I love to read the stories of Jesus' miracles that He did while here on earth, though it has been 2,000 years or so since Jesus performed a miracle on the Jericho Road while walking with His disciples and a crowd following as well.

We all need help, whether it be physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually at times in our struggles, and Jesus Christ is our answer to all of the above.

A blind man named Bartimaeus had heard about the healing that Jesus had done, so he cried out, Son of David, have mercy on me! And Scripture tells us Jesus stood still. What would it take for Jesus to stand still for you today? What cry of plea would make Jesus take notice of you, notice enough to stand still and listen to a heart in need? When Jesus commanded the blind man to come, those around him said: Be of good courage. Rise, for Jesus calls you, and casting off his garment, he came.

Jesus said to Bartimaeus: What do you want Me to do for you? And the blind man said: Lord, that I might receive my sight. Jesus replied: Go your way, for your faith has made you well. And immediately, he could see and followed Jesus.

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Be Informed and Vote

Dear Editor,

As we approach this crucial election in November, may we pray that our beloved country might have a new birth of freedom; not a freedom from God, which always leads to license of ultimate slavery. But rather a freedom built upon God and His commandments, apart from which any nation will eventually perish.

And let's never forget those 56 fearless men who met on that hot summer day July 4th, 1776, in Philadelphia, and signed that historic document, the Declaration of Independence. Those 56 fearless men considered liberty was so much more important than security that they pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honors. They fulfilled their pledge, they paid the price, and freedom was born.

To keep that freedom alive, we must elect men and women who can and will lead our communities, states and nation according to the precepts of the Bible. To do that, we must be informed and vote. To vote, we must register, which is now easy to do. For without registering and voting, there can be no freedom. So, please register and vote so we may never face the question, from our children and grandchildren, "Where were you the day freedom died in America?"

Rev. Charles Sutton
Tamarack Christian Missions

RC&D

Conservation Innovation for America's Working Lands

The Conservation Innovation Grants Program is managed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and supports market-based solutions to resource challenges and the tools, technologies and strategies for next-generation conservation efforts on America's working lands.

For more than a decade, CIG projects have addressed a wide diversity of topics and resource concerns, including soil health, irrigation efficiency, wildlife and pollinator habitat, water and air quality, greenhouse gas markets, on-farm energy use and conservation finance. Program Eligibility CIG applications are accepted from state or local governments, federally-recognized American Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations and individuals in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands) and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa Pacific Islands Area). CIG funds innovative, on-the-ground conservation projects, including pilot projects and field demonstrations.

Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D, or CCRCD, provides local leadership needed for developing, making necessary amendments to and carrying out a plan for the orderly development, conservation improvement and wise use of the area's natural resources, and to educate, collect, coordinate and disseminate information for development of human resources, thereby improving the economic opportunities of the people within the Chestatee-Chattahoochee Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

That is a mouthful, but to put it simply, CCRCD administers projects in communities that will improve the way of life for the residents living in the community by conserving natural resources.

CCRCD was recently awarded a contract to perform a Conservation Innovation Grant project for the Georgia Soil & Water Conservation Commission, or GSWCC. CCRCD gets to do the fun part: select the site, prepare the land, plant the seed, drive the tractors, and harvest the crops produced by the CIG project (oh pleeeeee Brer Bear, don't throw Brer Rabbit in dat Briar Patch!), and GSWCC gets to write the reports and deal with regulators. We needed four acres quickly because the planting

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RC&D Executive Director
Frank Riley



Uncle Hollis

During the 1930s, there were very few Funeral Homes in the Southern Appalachians. When a person in the community died, the local folks would build a coffin and prepare the deceased for burial. Everyone pitched in and helped the bereaved family.

There was a man in my grandfather's community that was a bootlegger. He ended many arguments with his fists and didn't believe in helping the less fortunate. As a result of this attitude, he wasn't very well liked, and people were scared of him. As the man aged, he tended to let himself go, meaning he didn't shave very often and wasn't very clean. Eventually, the man died, and nobody in our community would volunteer to prepare the man for burial.

My great grandfather Lon, Papa and Uncle Hollis pitied the family. So, they volunteered to prepare the body for burial. Lon made the coffin just as he had for anyone and everyone in the Trapptown Community and never took a dime for his services. He preferred to make each one from the tree of a white oak. The wood was sturdy and had a beautiful texture. While the coffin was being made, Papa and Hollis prepared the body. First, they began washing the body. Hollis began washing the man's feet and was working his way up the body.

Meanwhile, Coon was trying to comb the tangles from the man's hair. The two young men were talking, and Hollis asked, "Coon, if ye don't mind, I'd like to shave the old man. I believe he'd look a sight better with a good shave." My grandfather thought that was a good idea and volunteered to fetch the razor. As he turned to retrieve the razor and shaving mug, Hollis We Hunt experienced a life-changing moment. He had reached the man's waist and was about halfway through the process of washing the body when it had a spasm in the abdomen. This contraction of muscles caused the dead man to sit up. Later, Uncle Hollis stated, "All of a sudden, this fellow sat up, and I was eyeball to eyeball with a dead man." To make matters worse, the contractions caused the man to exhale, and Uncle Hollis felt and smelled the breath of a dead man on his face.

The young man knew the reputation of this fellow. He figured this fellow was trying to protect his ill-reputed earnings, and even though the man was dead, he figured the man was going to give him a whipping or worse. "All I could think of was this feller was going to try and snatch me from this life and take me over to the other side. There was no life in those hollow eyes, and his

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



Chamber of Commerce

The air is cool, clear, and I think I heard there was frost on the pumpkins last week. Fall is here, and the leaves are putting on a show. It's time for all our friends to come visit and experience the hospitality of the mountains. And we have plenty going on.

All children are invited to put a smile on the faces of seniors in our community by participating in Trick-or-Treat at

Stonehenge Senior Living. The event, held on Halloween from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., delights the senior residents who look forward to seeing the children every year. Stonehenge is located four and a half miles north of town on Murphy Highway. For additional information, please call 706-745-7703.

Everyone is invited to join us for this year's Halloween on the Square. Get ready for ghosts and goblins to be lurking downtown on the square with games, costume contests, and lots of trick or treating. Businesses get your

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Soil Testing

Soil testing is a very important part of growing a quality crop, having a good looking garden, or having a quality lawn. Soil testing gives you an insider look at what is going on in your soil. Without a soil test, you can't know what exactly is happening in the soil.

Let's take a look at what a soil test can do for you and why it's a good idea to have your soil tested.

If you have a garden at your house, it's a good idea to have your soil tested every other year. A soil test will show you the pH, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, and manganese levels in your soil. These are essential elements for plant growth. Nitrogen is also a very important nutrient for plant growth. However, nitrogen is very mobile in the soil. Therefore, you could test your soil and by the time that you receive your soil results back from the lab, the amount of nitrogen in the soil could be drastically different.

The ideal time to take a sample is a couple of months before you plant. This way, you have time to work on the recommendations provided in the soil sample before you plant. When taking a sample for your lawn, a depth of 4 inches is appropriate.

If you're taking a sample for gardens, ornamentals, mixed fruit trees, and wildlife plots, sample to a depth of 6 to 8 inches. The sample width should be about the diameter of a quarter. When you take the sample, it's best to take multiple samples from around the plot that you are interested in. This way, you'll get an average of the area that you're sampling and a better representative sample. Using a trowel or small shovel, take eight to 10 samples and mix them together in a bucket. From that bucket, you can take the sample that you'll bring into the Extension Office so that we can send it to the UGA labs. Make sure that you get enough soil so that the lab can test properly. A sandwich bag full of soil is what is needed.

If you're sampling from an area that has mulch or grass on top of it, push that material away so that you penetrate down to the soil. Pull out any rock or roots that you get with the soil sample and throw them away. When you take the sample, spread the wet/damp soil on a newspaper and let the soil air out overnight before bringing it in to the office, so that it dries down some.

When deciding how many samples you need to take, look at the area and determine how many different types of conditions you have. For example, if you have a low lying spot, a steep slope, and a wooded area, each one of these

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Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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Kenneth West
Publisher/Owner

Shawn Jarrard
Editor

Derek Richards
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Sports Editor

Mark Smith
Staff Writer

Website: www.nganews.com

Email: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com

Mailing: P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, Georgia 30514

Lowell Nicholson
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Phone: 706-745-6343 Fax: 706-745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, Georgia 30514