

Opinions

Everybody has one...

The Importance of Smoke Alarms

The importance of smoke alarms in your home is something that we write about several times a year. It cannot be overstated. It is a simple and easy way to save lives from home fires. Union County Fire Department encourages everyone to install smoke alarms throughout the home. If you have smoke alarms, it is important to ensure that they are working; that they are tested; and that you and your family know what to do when they alarm.

Why is it important to have smoke alarms in the home? A myth about a home fire is that the fire is what kills the occupants. That is possible, but the main killer is the smoke. Smoke reduces the amount of clean, breathable air and can fill a room in seconds.

Smoke contains harmful substances like carbon monoxide and hydrogen cyanide. These harmful substances, along with heated gases, irritate the lungs and prevent the body from using that little oxygen is breathed in. The person's body starts to shut down, they pass out, and then become a victim of smoke inhalation. Properly working smoke alarms can warn the occupants at the first signs of smoke and give them a chance to get out of the building before they breathe in too much of the harmful smoke.

Another issue is the materials found in a home today. Most are made of plastic. Plastic burns very quickly, and as it burns, it produces heavy, dark smoke that starts at the ceiling and collects down to the floor. This smoke is not only harmful but can severely reduce visibility. It can block out the lights and make escape difficult. A person can get disoriented in their own home from the layers of heavy, dark smoke.

You never know when a home fire may occur. Having smoke alarms can warn occupants and allow them to exit the home. But for this to happen, smoke alarms must be installed, tested, and the occupants must have an escape plan.

Union County Fire Department offers free smoke alarms to residents of Union County. A person can request the department to come to their home and install the smoke alarms. If you wish to request smoke alarms for your home, complete the request on our webpage at www.unioncountygga.gov/fire-department/ and select the Smoke Alarm Request link.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Don't Lose Focus

"They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." - Jesus

Are you too emotionally staked to the outcome of this election? However you feel about it, don't lose focus. Politics is downstream of culture, and culture is the collective thoughts and actions of people. Only Jesus has the power to give sight to the blind, wisdom to the foolish, and strength to the weak. When He does, culture will change and so will elections.

During World War II, in "Mere Christianity" C. S. Lewis wrote, "Enemy-occupied territory - that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed, you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage. When you go to church you are really listening-in to the secret wireless from our friends." That suggests the community of believers is part of a resistance. Our mission is to carry with us the presence, goodness, and truth of God to people under siege by a culture desperate to cancel Him.

The culture beckons people to prioritize the pursuit of entertainment, pleasure, and comfort. That sounds like the oldest lie of all, the one the serpent whispered in the Garden of Eden: "Ye shall be as gods." That's whispered in churches, too. Cal Thomas warns in "America's Expiration Date" about "a pseudo-religion that jettisons the doctrines of historical biblical Christianity and replaces them with feel-good, vaguely spiritual nostrums. The highest goal of the religious life is being happy and feeling good about oneself. It's the perfect religion for a self-centered, consumerist culture. But it is not authentic Christian faith." That religion needs no Savior. It does need politicians and their utopian promises.

Thomas offers a solution for politics and culture. "If reformation and restoration is to occur, it will not come from the top down, no matter how righteous government officials appear to be. It can only come from a restored community of believers and from the bottom up, which means it must come from you and from me." Apply the gospel of Christ to yourself first, and make that message your mission.

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All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Will the county have a Food Drive this year?

A. We definitely are. The Food Pantry located in the Blairsville Memorial Civic Center needs donations all year, but their stock of food items gets depleted tremendously during the holiday season. The food items we collect are taken immediately after the holidays to help with replenishing their supplies for the following year.

Q. Where will the buckets be located this year?

A. Residents will find two buckets located at the Union County Courthouse, (upstairs and downstairs). There will also be buckets located at the Union County Library, new Union County Recreation Department Sports Center lobby, Butternut Creek Golf Course, City Hall, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Q. When will the county buckets be set out?

A. We will try to have our buckets set out by Tuesday, November 10th, 2020.

Q. What type of items should be donated?

A. Non-perishable food items are best. Canned food is always a great option, but there are boxed items that are good too. It's always a good idea to keep all age groups in mind, including food items for children. Below is a list of suggested items that are always needed at the Food Pantry: Instant Potatoes, Grits Oatmeal, Peanut Butter, Dry pasta, Liquid boxed milk, Jelly, White Rice, Canned soups, Canned fruit, Boxed Mac & Cheese, Crackers, Canned tuna, Dinner kits Fruit snacks, Canned chicken, Spaghetti sauce, Cereal (low sugar), Juice

Q. Is it okay to make a monetary donation instead of food?

A. Yes! This is a great idea and very helpful to the Food Pantry. This way they are able to purchase the items as they need them. They know best what the specific needs are at any given time. You can bring monetary donations to the Union County Commissioner's Office; you can place your check in the box located on the front of the courthouse; or you can take your check directly to the Food Pantry in the Civic Center. Please make the check payable to the Union County Food Pantry.

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

Help When Needed

Dear Editor,

I am writing to thank Chris Fox and his crew for coming to Wilson Mountain on Friday evening (Oct. 30). Our power had been off since early Thursday morning and consequently no one on the mountain had water. Chris and his crew brought out generators so that the pump could work and water was restored quickly.

In addition, they came back several times to check on them and fill up the generators. A hot shower and the ability to wash the dishes was greatly appreciated. Chris made sure we had water through Saturday night when the power was finally restored.

This is an example of providing excellent customer service during a community-wide severe weather event.

Mark B. Davis

Trumpy-Dumpty and the Crown Virus Wall

Dear Editor,

1. Trumpy-Dumpty built his fake wall, But it doesn't deter anyone at all.

The ganstas just tunneled beneath this thing, Because they have dope and illegals to bring.

2. This wall is a monument to a stupid fool Who has used our goodness as a tool, Mixed with 20,000 lies over 3 1/2 years To bring millions of families to tears.

3. If he had been a leader as we had hoped In Jan. 2020, he would have taken the lead rope And pulled this great country out of the mire And away from this death and pain so dire.

4. Trumpy-Dumpty has always hoped for a crown. He believes he is a royal of some renown. Who cares about this coward or his needs?

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Peace On Earth

Dear Editor,

I was pondering the other day about peace on earth, and this is my take on it.

When the last song has been sung and the last instrument has been laid to rest and the last hero has come home from war and the last aircraft has made it's final flight. Will there be peace on earth?

When the last police officer or firefighter is laid to rest and the last debate in court has made its final point and all of the heartaches, disappointments, sorrows and pain cease to be. Will there be peace of earth?

When time ceases to be no more as we know and the shadows fall over the mountain range as a mother sings a sweet lullaby to her child with fever. Will there be peace on earth?

When the last school teacher lays down her eraser and neighbors get together to help one another and the last sermon has been preached from the pulpit. Will there be peace on earth?

See Combs, page 5A

Constitutional Line of Succession

Dear Editor,

Imagine that Joe Biden becomes President.

Imagine that shortly thereafter, because of his inability to meet the demands of the Office, he removes himself or, for one reason or another, is removed from that Office.

Following the Constitutionally-determined line of succession, Kamala Harris becomes President.

Nancy Pelosi, current Speaker of the House, becomes Vice President.

Oren Hatch (R-UT) is Speaker Pro Tem. He would leave the Senate and assume the duties of the Speaker of the House.

The governor of Utah would appoint a temporary replacement and a Special Election would later be held to fill (former) Sen. Hatch's seat in the Senate.

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"You're right, son. We should thank them more often."

Backpack Emergency Kit

Backpack Emergency Go Kit for Kids and Pets! - Wildfire planning usually is about important things we will take if we have to leave for a natural disaster, but what about our children who may be at school or a friend's house when the need to go quickly arrives. Kids need to be prepared too!

Here are some suggestions for things kids can do to prepare for the unthinkable, must-escape to safety when a natural disaster is headed their way. Wildfire could knock out your cell phone! Plans build your emergency "Go Kit" and get back to normal faster!

What would you do if there was a wildfire and you were stuck at school or home alone? It sounds scary, but if you plan ahead of time you'll have the things you need, making it easier to leave your house quickly, and in the case of an evacuation, to make your temporary housing situation more comfortable. And when fire ignites trees, grass and shrubs and burns into neighborhoods, not only do houses burn, but power lines can get knocked down and there is no electricity to pump gas for the car, get money out of an ATM machine, or to let you recharge your cell phone (the worst one!). Wildfires can also destroy cell towers making it impossible for you to use your cell phone, tablet, or laptop even if they are charged.

So, what can you do to prepare for a wildfire emergency? Follow these key steps to help you get started: » Bring your parents and talk to school officials to learn about their plans in case of a wildfire or other emergency. » Create an emergency plan with your family, including knowing where to meet if you are separated » Build your own "Go Kit," (a backpack works great) to keep at home. The kit will not only provide comfort during rough times, but it will also allow you to be better prepared to help someone else if they need it. Create a "secret password" with your parents—one that only you and they know. In case you are home alone and need a ride, your parents can provide the password to the family friend or neighbor who picks you up. That way, you will know this person can be trusted. » Create a second "Go Kit" to keep at school. Before including any items in your backpack for school, make sure to check with the school about any items you may not be allowed to carry on school grounds. Suggested items and actions to take to complete your Go Kit: » Fill a small notebook with information about your important contacts. » Work and cell phone numbers for your parent(s) or guardian(s), as well as their work address and

RC&D Executive Director
Frank Riley



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Dink

He was known by many names, but, our family called him Dink. Dad gave him the nickname when we were all much younger. He couldn't have been more than 6 months old when he began to walk. Dad had just received a promotion and we'd moved from Chicago to Kankakee, Illinois. Dad was painting our new house and went out to get us a hamburger. Upon returning home he came into the front door and Dink went tottering toward Dad, and his unproven legs gave way causing him to fall into a table which split open my brother's eyebrow. We rushed to the emergency room where the doctors worked on stitching him up.

The medical staff suspected Dad of abuse on our brother and the police were called. Dad, dressed in paint-stained overalls, forgot to bring his wallet and identification amidst all the confusion and the police didn't believe his story about Dink walking across the floor and falling. The only thing which saved my father from jail was that the nurse placed the little boy on the floor and he got up and walked to Dad during all the heated discussions.

Another time, our family was traveling back home to Alabama in a car. Somewhere in Kentucky late in the night a carload of men began harassing us by driving close to our bumper and flashing the headlights. The intoxicated passengers of the other car were hanging out the windows yelling obscenities and trying to run us off the road. We pulled into a town and stopped at a red light. Dad told us all to get on the floorboard, which we did except Dink. As the car pulled alongside of us he rolled down the window and said, "Hey, you bunch of nuts! My Dad has a gun and he is aiming to shoot every one of you." The carload of crazy people did not wait for the light to turn green. They sped away down the road toward Missouri.

The late 1960s found our family living in Chickamauga with Dad working in Chattanooga, Tennessee. We were in town one Saturday and Dad had to check on something in his office. We pulled up to the curb and he went inside. His office was just down the street from some kind of club, and while he was inside, two men came from the club. One man holding a knife was chasing a man holding a gun. They ran to our car, and the man with the gun hid behind our car while the man with the knife was at the front of the car. The two men were screaming at one another and the one began shooting at the other one. Mom screamed for us to get into the floorboard, which we did, except for Dink.

Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



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Chamber of Commerce

There's no shortage of storms in Blairsville-Union County's history. From the great blizzard of '93 to our most recent visitor, Hurricane Zeta, our community has seen its fair share of Mother Nature's havoc. But somehow, Mother Nature seems to come up short when she tries to shake our mountains. Here, when storms come, so do the people—linemen who work tirelessly hour after hour to restore power and remove debris, neighbors with their chainsaws and tractors ready to move trees from the middle of the road and emergency personnel pounding at the sound of the tones.

Our community banded together to help anyone in need. It's the mountain way. It's the right way. It's how we thrive and grow better together. We're grateful to live and raise families here in this place where no matter what the storm, at the end of the day, we're all just people seeking to make the world a better, kinder place for our children. And it sure doesn't hurt that after

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Moles and Voles

Moles and voles can be very damaging to your yard. They can dig up long tunnels through your yard and make a meal out of the plant roots. This can leave your yard with a lumpy look and wilted dying plants. The key to treating these issues is figuring out whether you have moles or voles in your yard.

Understanding some of the differences between moles and voles is important to decide how to treat them. Technically speaking voles are rodents, but moles are not. Moles are carnivorous animals that eat insects and grubs that they find underground. If you look at a picture of a mole they have very large front feet. They're able to use these big, meaty claws to 'swim' through the soil creating the tunnels in your yard. They are looking for insects to eat in the soil. They won't eat the roots of plants, as those aren't in their diet.

Voles are smaller in size than a mole, looking similar to a mouse. The easiest way to tell the difference between a vole and a mouse is that a mouse's tail is about the same length as its body. A vole has a much shorter tail. Voles are herbivores, meaning that they feed on plants. Bulb plants are often a particular favorite of voles. Voles have much smaller front paws than moles do. This means that voles are not nearly as adept at digging tunnels through the ground. Voles will often use tunnels that have been left behind by moles.

Because moles and voles have different diets and behavior they must be treated differently for control. There are a couple of different methods for mole control. The first one is to use a granular insecticide to get rid of all the insects and grubs in your yard. Once the food source is removed the moles will move on to find a new food source. A second way of removing moles is by placing a trap in their main tunnel. Go out into your yard and tamp down all the tunnels that you can find. Wherever the ground has popped back up the next day is the main tunnel. Repeated trapping may be necessary because a single yard could be host to several moles. Some of the grubs that moles eat, such as earthworms, are a sign of healthy soil. Moles also like moist soil because it is easier for digging. This means that if you do a good job taking care of your garden you will also inadvertently be encouraging moles to tunnel!

Voles can also be trapped. Place a mouse trap with peanut butter near an active site to catch the voles. If you are able to get rid of the moles in your yard oftentimes the voles will also leave because they can't do a good job of digging their

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Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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