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A. It is OK to have a fire in your fireplace or wood stove. This still can pose a danger if you don't take precautions. It is recommended by fire department personnel that you have your chimney and/or stove pipes cleaned out and inspected, because there is still the risk of embers escaping out of the chimney. This is especially true when a chimney fire caused by a build-up of creosote occurs. Then massive amounts of sparks and embers escape into the atmosphere, plus your home could catch fire. The biggest risk will be disposing of the embers, ash and coals. The recommendation is to place the embers in some type of metal container and place them outdoors to cool, away from any flammable material. The best suggestion is in your driveway, but make sure they are not near any brush or leaves or in an area where these might blow up against the container and catch fire from transferred heat.

Q. How much rain will we need for the water usage restrictions and burn ban to be lifted?

A. This is a historic drought. We will need a long period of significant rain for the water usage restrictions and burn ban to be lifted. The weather forecast shows a 20% chance of rain on Saturday and a 40% chance of rain next Wednesday. We will be very thankful for any small amount that we receive, but even if we received rain all day on both days it would not be enough to lift the restrictions or the burn ban. It will take a lot of rain to get the water levels up significantly. Everyone needs to remember that one day of rain WILL NOT be enough and the Burn Ban and water usage restrictions are in effect until further notice.

Q. Have there been any

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

my watching a drunk man trying to ride one. Soon all the nephews took the side of Dennis. They all started making wise cracks about their Uncle's bike riding abilities. Pogy must have thought he needed more courage so the longer the conversation went the more moonshine he consumed. He was almost to the point of complete inebriation before he found enough courage to tackle the bicycle. Suddenly he looked at his nephew and asked, "Paul, let me try out your new bicycle?"

Now, my daddy was very young, 10 at the time, but, his mother never raised a fool. He knew his uncle was intoxicated and he didn't want his new bicycle damaged. So, he convinced his uncle to ride on the seat while he peddled the bicycle around in the front yard. All went well and Pogy was really enjoying this bicycle ride. Then with a mischievous grin Uncle Dennis spoke up saying, "I'll wager you can't ride that bike all by yourself, C. L. Cummings." With a look of determination the uncle placed his feet on the ground and gently removed his nephew from the bicycle. He absconded with the bicy-

wildland fires here in Union County?

A. We have had 65 unauthorized fire calls and brush fires since the burn ban was issued, November 4th at 8 a.m. We have been very fortunate that the Union County Fire Department, Volunteer Fire Departments, Georgia Forestry and the United States Forest Service fire crews have been able to handle them, often all working together. Anyone guilty of outdoor burning will be fined by the County from this point on. Also remember, if you cause a fire to get out which requires Georgia Forestry or USFS fire crews to be dispatched to put out the fire, you will be responsible for the cost of suppressing that fire. These suppression costs are charged by the State of Georgia and the Federal Government to cover cost of man power and equipment to fight the fire.

Q. Does everyone know about the burn ban?

A. At this point, everyone should be aware of the burn ban, and there is no excuse not to know. The County has made announcements on social media, the newspaper, radio, television, and through the Union County Text Alert System. Additionally, the County with the assistance of GDOT, has placed two electronic message boards advising of the Burn Ban at main intersections and we have also put up small "Burn Ban" signs all over the county, including inside the Blairsville city limits and Suches.

If you have particular questions regarding the Burn Ban please call the Union County Fire Department at 706-439-6091. If you have questions about the water restrictions, please contact your water Authority, which will be City of Blairsville, Notla Water Authority, or Coosa Water Authority.

cle and began pedaling down the

lane to the dirt road which would become Highway 81 in the late 1950s. Pogy was riding the bike and having a ball as he began the long gradual 1/2 mile slope down the hill toward Cummings Creek. But, then things changed. I guess the weight of a full grown man riding the bike of a 10 year old was too much because the chain pooped off the sprockets and cries of joy soon became cries of fear.

He knew that he was going really fast with no way to stop. He also knew the bridge crossing was treacherous and if he went off the bridge it was a 35 foot drop to the rocky creek bed below. Then he remembered the sand. It is hard to follow a drunk man's logic, but he must've figured the sand would slow him down just like our modern day truck ramp on US 129 out at Vogel. Pogy had no idea the deep sand would stop him as quick as it did. The nephews ran down the road and found their uncle lying about 25 feet in front of the bicycle. His nose and forehead were skinless and bleeding.

But, otherwise he was okay and he never wanted to ride another bicycle.

Drugs ... continued from Page 4A

which is found in the ergot fungus that grows on rye and other grains. It is produced in crystal form in illegal laboratories, mainly in the United States. These crystals are converted to a liquid for distribution. It is odorless, colorless, and has a slightly bitter taste. Popular street names for LSD include acid, battery acid, boomers, dots, golden dragon, hippie, loony toons, Lucy in the sky with diamonds, microdot, pane, Superman, yellow sunshine and zen.

Primarily called "acid", LSD is sold on the street in small tablets ("microdots"), capsules or gelatin squares ("window panes"). It is sometimes added to absorbent paper, which is then divided into small squares decorated with designs or cartoon characters ("loony toons"). Occasionally it is sold in liquid form. But no matter what form it comes in, LSD leads the user to the same place—a serious disconnection from reality.

LSD users call an LSD experience a "trip," typically lasting twelve hours or so. When things go wrong, which often happens, it is called a "bad trip," causing fear and panic. Users see images, hear sounds and feel sensations that seem very real but do not exist. Sensations may seem to "cross over," giving the user the feeling of hearing colors and seeing sounds. LSD accumulates in the body, increasing the tolerance for the drug and the risk of a bad trip.

What are the risks of LSD? The effects of LSD hallucinations are unpredictable. They depend on the amount taken, the person's

mood and personality, and the surroundings in which the drug is used. It is a roll of the dice – a racing, distorted high or a severe, paranoid low. Extreme changes in mood – anywhere from a spaced-out "bliss" to intense terror, are also experienced. The worst part is that the LSD user is unable to tell which sensations are created by the drug and which are part of reality.

Normally, the first effects of LSD are experienced 30 to 90 minutes after taking the drug. Often, the pupils become dilated. The body temperature can become higher or lower, while the blood pressure and heart rate either increase or decrease. Sweating or chills are not uncommon.

LSD users can experience loss of appetite, sleeplessness, dry mouth and tremors. Visual changes are among the more common effects and the user can become fixated on the intensity of certain colors. Taken in large enough doses, LSD produces delusions and visual hallucinations. The ability to make sensible judgements and see common dangers is impaired. Some LSD users experience an intense bliss they mistake for "enlightenment".

Many LSD users experience flashbacks, or a recurrence of the LSD trip, often without warning, long after taking LSD. Bad trips and flashbacks are only part of the risks of LSD use. Once it starts, there is often no stopping a "bad trip", which can go on for up to 12 hours. In fact, some people never recover from an acid-induced psychosis.

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could catch fire.

Finally, be sure to clear any vegetation that could be obstructing your mailbox or other surface that shows your house number, and keep your driveway clear of low-hanging branches. Firefighters can't help if they can't find your house! Though we may be just

experiencing smoky air from fires far away from our homes for now, it is important to always be prepared for a wild-fire that might come onto your property. These tips will help keep both you and those who need to fight the fires safer and can prevent the spread of an uncontrolled forest fire.

Riley ... continued from Page 4A

interagency restrictions and closures *coordinate fire prevention efforts with the public, special target groups, state and local agencies, and elected officials *promote public and personal responsibility regarding fire prevention in the wildland/urban interface *assist Incident Management Teams in accomplishing their objectives in working with the public. Mobilization of a team may occur when an unusual event of circumstance warrants or is predicted. Examples are: *severe burning conditions *unusually high fire occurrence *majority of firefighting resources committed *preparedness levels above normal. Benefits of Wildland Fire Prevention Education Teams: *reduce the loss of life *reduce resource and property losses *reduce the cost of suppression *improve inter-agency relations. Organization and Ordering: A team consists of a Team Leader, a Public Affairs Officer, Prevention Specialist(s), and an optional trainee or other team members as the situation dictates (Finance Officer, Logistics Specialist, etc.).

Trained interagency personnel can be mobilized through normal dispatch channels to assist in fire prevention/education at any level of an organization. The individuals ordered for prevention/education

teams must already have the skills required to fill the position for which they have been chosen because there is usually not time for training.

Wildland Fire Prevention Education Teams usually go on 14 day assignments and work in the community for 14 straight days. A lot of their activities are at night or on weekends when people are available to gather and listen to their message. There is currently a team here in Northeast Georgia presenting the Firewise message to schools, civic clubs, elected officials, fire departments, church groups and any others who will listen.

When people are threatened with an impending disaster that might take away all their possessions or even their life, they need someone to tell them how to prepare to get out of harm's way and where they can go and this is where a Wildland Fire Prevention and Education team can be invaluable because they have seen these things before and know what to tell the residents to be prepared for.

For more information contact the local Georgia Forestry Commission, US Forest Service, or Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council. Info. ccrd@gmail.com

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Department, Forest Service, Union County Sheriff's Office and City of Blairsville Police Department and to all who have helped to keep us safe, thank you. I appreciate the Union County Rotary Club having a special event to show their appreciation for these public servants.

I appreciate everyone taking this burn ban very seriously as to ensure the safety of our family, friends, and neighbors in the community. I attended the recent County Commission Meeting to hear of the large acreage burned in Fannin County and neighboring counties in North Carolina. After hearing those reports, it was another reminder of how dangerous the situation has been lately. Thank you, Chief Dyer, and members of the Union County Fire Department for your expediency in dealing with any fires that had been started over the

Fowler...

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Most High God and submit to His purposes for our nation.

The current strife has many faces. Riots in the streets. Pejoratives on our tongues. Anger on social media. It doesn't have to be that way. When we see the "Imago Dei" in one another, we cannot harbor such acrimony. If Lincoln could find reason to be thankful, surely we can. "Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good" (Ps. 107:8-9).

Cordier ...

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ground water and served as a repository of valuable resources that could be recycled.

I have watched with satisfaction as the open pit was transformed into a grass covered field and attempts were begun to provide recycling opportunities for our community. We can now be proud of our new facility which is clean, organized and convenient.

I am most hopeful that in the very near future our new center will be recycling glass which is widely recycled throughout our nation. As more and more people work to recycle valuable resources we can make a positive impact on our planet. We are not just recycling plastic, cardboard, paper and more, we are being respectful of the gifts of this earth and we will pass those gifts on to future generations.

Jennifer Cordier

Dyer...

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many things that keep everyone busy, we should stop for a moment, reflect on all that we are blessed with and be thankful. ~Union County Fire Department – Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Retired Firefighters Breakfast

The Retired Firefighters Breakfast is held the first Friday of each month, 9 a.m. at Hole in the Wall Restaurant, Blairsville, GA.

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Convention. It was eventually justified in part as a stopgap to potentially reverse the vote if the people elected a criminal, traitor, or similar kind of heinous person. The Founders wanted to empower democratic elements in the American system, but they feared a kind of pure, unrestrained democracy that had brought down great republics of the past.

As students of ancient history, the Founders feared the destructive passions of direct democracy and as recent subjects of an overreaching monarch, they equally feared the rule of an Elite unresponsive to the will of the people. The Electoral College was a compromise, neither fully democratic nor aristocratic.

The system empowers states, especially smaller ones, because it incentivizes presidential candidates to appeal to places that may be far away from population centers. Farmers in Iowa may have very different concerns than bankers in New York. A more Federalist

system of electing presidents takes that into account.

The national popular vote would appeal only to the biggest population centers. "Swing states" change over time and the 2016 election was a prime example of "swing-state" unpredictability and the erosion of the traditional partisan political map.

Additionally, if the President were elected by unfiltered national vote, small and rural states would become irrelevant and campaigns would spend their time in large, populous districts.

America's election system has operated smoothly for more than 200 years because the Electoral College accomplishes its intended purposes. America's Presidential election process preserves Federalism, prevents chaos, grants definitive electoral outcomes and prevents tyrannical or unreasonable rule. The Founding Fathers created a stable, well-planned, and carefully designed system—and it works.

George A. Mitchell