

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Turnout Gear

Throughout US history, firefighters have worn many different types of protective clothing. This protective clothing has evolved from the simple garments of the revolutionary war times to the modern turnout gear and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). The modern day turnout gear and SCBA enables a firefighter to enter and work in hazardous environments such as a burning building, car accident or hazardous material scene with added protection and safety.

The turnout gear, or bunker gear as it may be called, is a set of fire resistant clothing issued to every firefighter. The turnout gear has three layers: a thermal liner, a moisture barrier, and a fire resistant outer shell. The purpose of the thermal liner is to keep the extreme heat away from the body. Temperatures in a burning building can reach up to 1200 degrees F. This thermal liner protects the firefighter from ambient heat.

The moisture barrier protects the firefighter from steam given off when water is sprayed on the fire. It also provides protection from blood borne pathogens during accident scenes. The outer shell is made of a mixture of fire resistant materials to protect from flames, extreme heat, and sharp objects. Turnout gear can weigh up to 20 lbs. and includes coat, pants, helmet, boots, gloves and hood. The gear covers the entire body of the firefighter except for the face. That is covered by the facemask of the SCBA.

The self-contained breathing apparatus is worn by the firefighter to provide breathable air in hazardous environments. It includes a backpack harness, air tank, air regulator, personal alert safety system device and face mask. The SCBA can weigh up to 30 lbs. Firefighters wear the SCBA at fires where there is a great deal of heat, smoke, and toxic gases. Inhaling the super-heated gases from a fire can be fatal instantly. Firefighters may also wear the SCBA in an environment where the oxygen level is low such as an underground pipe or sewer. The SCBA provides cool, breathable air in an immediately dangerous to life or health atmosphere or IDLH atmosphere.

The turnout gear and SCBA together are considered the fire-

See Dyer, page 5A

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



We Have Songs

Singing and playing the banjo were not what first brought fame to Steve Martin. His public career began in comedy in the 1960s when he worked with the Smothers Brothers and Johnny Carson. Music was part of his stand-up routine, but in the last 15 years or so Martin has made a serious showing in bluegrass music.

I'm sure Martin meant no offense with his satirical tune "Atheists Don't Have No Songs," and it is a catchy tune (look it up on YouTube). The lyrics include, "Baptists have the Rock of Ages. Atheists just sing the blues. For atheists there's no good news. They'll never sing a song of faith. For atheists, they have a rule, the 'he' is always lower case!" As concerned as I am for my friends who have yet to believe, I find little humor here. And whether or not they have songs, I'll leave between them and Martin.

But this I know. We Christians have songs. Once I heard Dr. David Kirkpatrick live on a systematic theology lecture for sleepy seminarians when he declared that the most profound hymn ever written is "And Can It Be." Billy Graham said in 2005 that this is his favorite hymn.

To understand the emotion of the hymn, you must know what happened to the author just days before he wrote it. Though raised by godly parents in the Anglican Church, Charles Wesley reached adulthood troubled and searching. A Moravian brother in London led him to understand that his best endeavors for God were not enough. He embraced God's grace through faith, and was saved. He said, "I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ."

So, he marveled at his good fortune with this: "And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood? Died He for me who caused his pain! For me, who Him to death pursued? Amazing love! How can it be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me? Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night. Thine eye diffused a quickening ray. I woke; the dungeon flamed with light. My chains fell off, my heart was free! I rose, went forth, and followed thee."

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Have you had any luck with the litter problem?

A. This week we had a resident call the office and send a photo of a truck to us. She had followed one of the local commercial haulers who had left the transfer station after emptying their load. While she followed the truck, three pieces of paper/plastic flew off the truck into the highway. This was a few miles from the transfer station so I wonder how many other pieces of paper flew out on the way there.

Apparently, here is what happened. The commercial hauler pulled into the Transfer Station building and dumped their load and the driver either did not get out of the truck to look and see that everything slid out of the truck, or he got out and did not inspect his truck bed adequately.

Q. What can you do about a problem like this?
A. First, as bad as I hate to, we will issue a fine. Second, we will demand that the company managing our transfer station make periodic inspections of trucks leaving there to be sure that their loads are empty and there are no bags or trash sticking to the inside of the truck bed, that will easily fly out when the truck leaves. Third, if this does not work, we may have to install video surveillance in the building to make sure this does not continue to happen.

Q. Does the county have any other options related to stopping littering?

A. We plan on working with the Sheriff's office to see if we can issue warnings at first, then tickets, to any vehicle bringing trash/garbage loads to the transfer station either not covered or secured loads. As you may remember a couple of weeks we found five trash bags on the side of the highway between the courthouse and the transfer station that had blown off in transit to the dump.

Q. Are people intentionally throwing out paper onto the highway?

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor

Repeal and Replacement of the Affordable Care Act

Dear Editor,
The new plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act has been released and it can be summarized in six words: Fewer covered, weaker protections, higher costs. Following are some of the highlights of the proposed bill:

- 1) Expansion of Medicaid under the ACA would be phased out by 2020. The 31 states that expanded Medicaid programs will either need to make do with less federal funding or rollback expansions.
- 2) Income based tax subsidies to help people pay their health insurance premiums would be repealed and replaced by a tax credit. Tax credits essentially help the wealthy and do little to assist the middleclass and the poor.
- 3) Certain categories of services such as coverage for pregnancy and mental health would be repealed.
- 4) States would be given block grants to establish high-risk pools and increase coverage among people who would be relatively expensive to insure, such as individuals with preexisting conditions.
- 5) A premium penalty would be assessed on people who have a lapse in health care coverage over a certain period of time. The penalty could be up to 30% of the monthly premium.

See Cordier, page 5A

Planned Parenthood

Dear Editor,
You had an editor's note attached to Mrs. Gray's letter in the February 28 issue that was factually incorrect. You stated that Planned Parenthood facilities did not offer abortion services. I was shocked to read this as it was so contrary to my previous understanding.

A visit to the Planned Parenthood website revealed the following headers and bullet points: The Abortion Pill/Available from many Planned Parenthood health centers In-Clinic Abortion Procedures/Available from many Planned Parenthood health centers.

I am really unhappy to know that my trusted local news source prints information without even the barest amount of research. Can I trust anything else you print?

You owe it to your readers to set the record straight and retract your previous statement.

Carol McKechnie

Editor's Note: As I stated before, Planned Parenthood will help women seeking abortions find a health center that provides that service. It makes recommendations on birth control methods. Planned Parenthood says only 3 percent of its total services were related to abortions. The other 97 percent of services were for contraception, treatment and tests for sexually transmitted diseases, cancer screenings, and other women's health services. Planned Parenthood is not allowed to use federal dollars to help pay for abortions. Planned Parenthood's government funding comes from two sources: the Title X Family Planning Program and Medicaid. About \$70 million is Title X funding. The rest — about \$293 million — is Medicaid funding, which includes both federal and state money.

But Planned Parenthood cannot use the money it receives from the federal government for abortions. According to the Department of

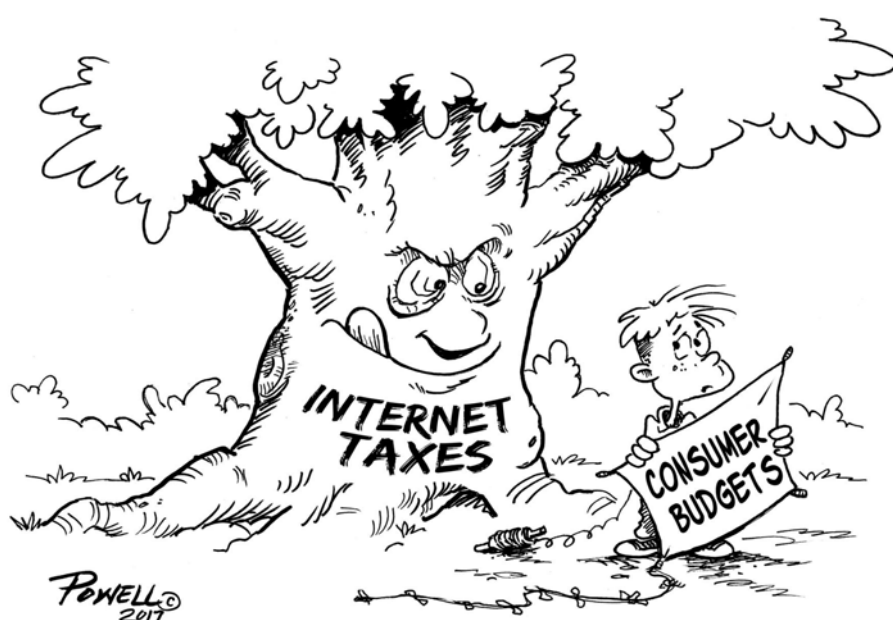
See McKechnie, page 5A

Thank You

Dear Editor,
As many of you know, UCB Ingles branch will be closing March 17, 2017 and I wanted to take this opportunity to let my customers know what an impact you have made in my life. I have learned many things from each one of you. We have laughed and cried together. I will cherish the moments we have had together.

It has been a pleasure to serve each of you and may God bless.

Thank you,
Debbie Groves, Teller



Letters to the Editor

Editor's Note

Dear Editor,
I applaud the editor's note regarding Arlene Gray's recent letter, clarifying and correcting her belief that Planned Parenthood provides abortion services.

I would like to answer her question about why there appear to be no charities that "support abortion" to support Planned Parenthood? Planned Parenthood is a 501(c)3 organization (in other words, a "charity" according to the federal tax code) and I, along with millions of others, make a monthly tax-deductible donation to Planned Parenthood. I personally do not agree that only those who "support abortion" should support Planned Parenthood or organizations that do provide abortion services; I believe that abortion is a personal decision and I support Planned Parenthood because of all the good they do for poor women in this country.

Karen Reynolds Gramenz

Movies

Dear Editor,
There have been a lot of movies made about giants, some mythical, some fantasy, like the story of Jack and the Beanstalk and while these and many other movies take us to faraway places; there is another giant that we all face in life. The giant of fear. Our emotions can and do sometimes run rampant when we are faced with a situation that seems impossible for us to deal with and we wonder who we can run to for help. We see a great example in the Bible of facing fear with trusting in God when Moses died and Joshua stepped in to lead God's people into the promise land.

Spies had gone into the land previously to see what they were dealing with and ten of the twelve came back afraid and told of seeing giants in the land, but Joshua and Caleb believed in the Word of God. God told Joshua everywhere you walk in this land I will give to my people, also God told Joshua I will be with you all the way; you have nothing to fear. The faithfulness of God in the past should be an encouragement for us all in the coming days ahead.

Today as we face the giants of fear, worry, anxiety and uncertainties in a maddening world of mass confusion where the devil often reminds us of our past and present sins and the joy of the pleasures of what this world can offer, but God has promised us who believe on His Name that soon there is a promised land we shall inherit soon called heaven where all fears, worries and troubles will be remembered no more for all of eternity. What is your worst fear? Not knowing where you are going after death. God says: Fear not, I am with you always.

Frank F. Combs

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, IL. 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 staff suspected Dad of beating 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 along side 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. 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 2 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. By this point the two men moved to opposite sides of the car still yelling and cursing one another. Dad came from his office and saw the two men standing beside our car. He tried to come toward the car, but, each time he made a

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



Backyard Nuisance Animals

As the weather starts to warm, we are going to start seeing a lot more pests come about, and I'm talking about things much bigger than insects. Woodpeckers, deer, moles/voles and several other animals are starting to frequent our yards in hope of the first tasty growth of spring. While these pests are almost impossible to completely eliminate, you can take measures to reduce the damage they do to your property.

Woodpeckers are probably the most stinging and infuriating nuisance we have at the moment. They begin to drum on trees, houses and almost any wooden surface they can find, often starting at dawn. Most of us know that they do this to find insects to eat, but they also drum to attract mates and claim territory. While there is not a way to completely exclude woodpeckers from your property, you can make your house a less appealing surface for drumming. Many wooden framed houses are susceptible to carpenter bee control, and these insects are tasty treats for pileated, red headed and other common woodpeckers. By getting rid of these and other pests that feed on your wood, you will reduce the number of birds coming to your house for food. Other deterrents are primarily scare-based: wind chimes, garden spinners, wind socks and other decorative additions can startle woodpeckers and make them feel unsafe near your home. Birdfeeders should also be placed away from your house if you have a woodpecker problem.

Deer are another common nuisance in the warm weather, and one that I get calls about constantly. While there are many "deer resistant" plants that deer seem not to bother (many herbs and woody plants), deer will eat practically anything if they are hungry enough. They tend to prefer new tender growth and any fruits or berries that plants produce. Anything that is tasty to us is just as tasty to them, which is what makes them such a nuisance! Unfortunately, the only tried and true method to control deer damage is complete exclusion through a tall electric fence. Deer repellants have mixed effectiveness, and any noise makers or other scare tactics quickly lose their effect.

Moles and voles are garden terrors that I've written on several times but always get questions about. Now is the time of year to try to catch damage and new infestations early as they begin to forage on insects and new plant growth. If you have a vole problem, make the landscape less appealing by removing unnecessary mulch, leaf litter and other habitat in which they take refuge. Some small or medium mouse traps baited with peanut butter and sunflower seeds can help to reduce their numbers. Moles however, are more difficult and require traps be set

See Mattee, page 5A

From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West Charles Duncan
Owner/Publisher 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