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tries have restricted the use of kratom due to the potential for abuse.

The fact that kratom is derived from a plant should not lead consumers to believe it 100% safe and "all-natural". While certainly not all botanicals have dangerous properties, drugs with dangerous effects can come from botanicals, for example, heroin (opium poppy), cocaine (coca leaves), and nicotine (tobacco).

On the Internet, kratom is marketed in a variety of forms: raw leaf, powder, gum, dried in capsules, pressed into tablets, and as a concentrated extract. In the US and Europe, it appears its use is expanding, and recent reports note increasing use by the college-aged population, with availability as close as the nearest convenience store.

Case reports describe the following adverse effects from kratom: addiction, withdrawal, hypothyroidism, and liver injury, aching of muscles and bones and jerky limb movements.

Kratom addiction and chronic use has led to cases of psychosis with hallucinations, delusion, and confusion. High-dose use may lead to fast heart rate (tachycardia) and low blood pressure (hypotension). Tremor, anorexia and weight loss are other possible side effects with long-term use.

Placing kratom into Schedule I would place it in the same category as heroin, LSD or marijuana, and prevent access for medical research, a concern for many experts, consumers, and advocacy groups. Lack of quality scientific evidence confounds the evaluation of the safety of kratom. Concerns also exist that the general public would not be able to identify or confirm the quality or purity of kratom from any Internet source.

The FDA has warned consumers not to use any products labeled as containing kratom. As of February 2018, the FDA has reported on 44 related deaths linked with kratom use, often in use with other substances.

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either ionization, photoelectric, or both sensing systems to detect a fire.

Ionization-type smoke alarms have a small amount of radioactive material between two electrically charged plates which ionize the air and cause current to flow between the plates. When smoke enters the chamber, it disrupts the flow of ions, reducing the flow of current and activating the alarm. Photoelectric-type alarms aim a light source into a sensing chamber at an angle away from the sensor. Smoke enters the chamber, scattering light onto the light sensor and triggering the alarm. Photoelectric alarms respond slightly faster to smoldering fires; ionization alarms respond slightly faster to flaming fires. Ionization alarms are less expensive and the most widely used.

Smoke alarms are appliances, just like toasters, televisions, and furnaces. Unlike other appliances, these devices function quietly in the background, and its alarm, in response to a real smoke situation or to testing, is the only evidence that it works.

A television that will not play will not lead to tragedy, but a smoke alarm that fails to sound in a fire, could. Roughly half of the smoke alarms collected as inoperable and stud-

ied in the National Smoke Detector Project were more than 10 years old, hence older than the currently recommended replacement age. Alarms designed solely to detect smoke should be replaced every 10 years.

Buying, installing, testing, and maintaining home smoke alarms is essential protection from fire, but it is not enough. Many households have not developed the escape plans that would allow them to use the extra warning time smoke alarms provide effectively. Escape plans identify any obstacles to secondary exits if the main door is blocked, a meeting place outside the home for household members to gather, and makes provisions for household members who need help.

We can "Firewise" the outside of our homes to lower the risk of destruction by a wildfire, but we also need to protect our families on the inside by installing, maintaining, and regularly testing our smoke alarms that are our first-line of defense against fire and smoke while we sleep.

For more information on Smoke Alarms, contact your local Fire Rescue Department or Chestatee-Chatahoochee RC&D at: info.ccrd@gmail.com.

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This should be true of anyone who acquires the requisite legal permits and puts that revolver or that pistol in her or his holster. We should feel a weightiness, a heaviness, a burden of great responsibility -- and we should shudder at the idea of actually pulling that weapon on anyone.

The person who is hesitant to carry a gun, who loathes the thought of actually ever having to use it -- but decides that (s)he will take on the burden of carrying for the sake of potentially being in a position to protect himself or his neighbor, if absolutely necessary and unavoidable -- that is the person who carries out of Love. (S)he is the type of person we should want to carry a gun. To carry in this mind of service is actually a way to follow the command to bear one another's burdens.

It is indeed a burden to carry a gun. It requires sig-

nificant and inescapable forethought, regular training and planning: what to carry, how to carry it, how to conceal it, where to go, where not to go. Carrying is a limit that the carriers put upon themselves for the sake of others. If one is unwilling to take on this burden -- the strain of forethought, self-restraint, and willingness to intercede if necessary, and only if necessary -- then one should not carry a gun.

Let me live out my life without having to resort to drawing a firearm. Please.

With the right motivation and posture, one can bless his or her community by living life with a gun in her or his holster. Violence may be stopped in its tracks. Neighbors may be protected. Evil might be interdicted. Lives might be saved.

It is an act of personal responsibility and of extended Love.

George A. Mitchell

Bennett... continued from Page 4A

federal courthouse on Wednesday, Dec. 19, for the news of the trial delay for the doctors in alleged fraudulent prescriptions; and then on returning to Blairsville, learned of the fatal Piper airplane crash near Blairsville airport and rushed there.

Jarrard had good detail how the term limit talk wasn't an agenda item; corrected a rare GBI apparent wrong release making those arrested as being from Blairsville -- instead, J. identifies them as being from Morganton; had complex federal court rule language about "severing" of two defendants to maybe be singly judged in April; and related how a man drove his tractor to make a path to the Piper crash scene to aid the investigation.

The four articles made the severe early Christmas edition close. All got good calm headlines. All had photos. All got over the fold to be seen in tracks.

The paper would have been forgiven had those stories waited a week to get in because of the holiday. Hear me, North Georgia News readers: You have a tireless worker, one superbly trained, reporting for you.

Tom Bennett, retired Atlanta Journal-Constitution newsman now living in the Martins

Creek Community near Murphy, North Carolina.

Editor's Note: The North Georgia News would like to thank Mr. Bennett for his recognition of what we do here at the newspaper. As editor, I would like to clarify that I do not believe the GBI erred in reporting the youths as being from Blairsville. Rather, the North Georgia News has attempted to provide a bit of nuance to the GBI report by taking into account the youths' proximity and ties to the Morganton community and Fannin County generally. -SJ

Dyer...

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where we were going to build the facility. We are currently well into Phase II which consist of building live fire training rooms. These will be used to train firefighters on fire behavior and extinguishment of structure fires.

These are just a few accomplishments of 2018. The 2019 plan is complete. We will continue to evaluate and utilize our strategic plan, programs and projects to better prepare ourselves and to protect the community. Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

the kids would hang out there and swim. All the magazines of the day displayed beautifully tanned girls in bikini bathing suits and the Adams girls wanted to be like those pictures in the magazines.

So, Carolynn came up with the idea of sunbathing on the tin roof of their house. So, the girls climbed up there and laid out on the slightly sloped roof over the back porch. This section of the house faced west and everything was fine at 11 a.m. However, when the sun came over the noon mark and the porch received the afternoon sun it became fairly hot and oppressive. The girls would have climbed down off the porch if they hadn't been asleep. We do not need to go into details, but, I will say they blistered in places that had never seen the sun.

Uncle Ralph was a year or two younger than Mom. He is a quiet person which says very little. He enjoys hunting, fishing and anything in the great outdoors. One night shortly after Mom and Dad married they along with Ray and Linda were at the Adams house. Ralph came up with the idea of riding the road looking for rabbits to

shoot. So, Mom drove the car while Uncles Ray and Ralph along with Dad rode down the Adams Loop Road on the hood of Dad's 1953 Ford. The idea was to drive slow until a rabbit was spotted. Upon stopping one of the boys would shoot the rabbit as it lay still beside the road. Before proceeding with the tory remember these old cars had clutch with a manual transmission.

As the car crept slowly down the old road Dad spotted a rabbit. He made the motion to stop the car. Mom stepped on the accelerator instead of the clutch and brake. This threw the boys into the windshield. This caused Mom to panic and she stomped the brake instead of the clutch causing the car to lurch which resulted in throwing the boys from the hood. Dad was thrown into a briar thicket. Uncle Ray landed on a barbed wire fence and Ralph slid from the hood onto the road. He hit the ground on his feet and running to keep from being run over. Mom was scared and laughing at the same time. Being a man of few words Uncle Ralph quietly walked to Dad and said, "You know she can't drive don't you?"

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

bers and promote communication and support among Union County business owners.

In the upcoming year, we are introducing new programs including our Chamber Awards Banquet event on January 24th, followed by a Members Breakfast on January 29th. Mark your calendars now to join us on February 21st for our annual An Evening with the STARS banquet which recognizes students who shine brightly in our schools and community. The return of our Eggs and Issues breakfasts will provide an opportunity to hear from our local officials regarding plans for 2019 and updates on current projects. Always tackling new initiatives and incorporating the use of technology, we are planning several workshops to answer questions on how to enhance your use of the Chamber's website and how to best utilize other Chamber resources.

Paris...

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about county government?

A. You can call my office, Union County Commissioner at 706-439-6000 and they can either connect you to a department to assist you, or get the answers for you by returning your phone call.

Fowler...

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what you see. He is your hope for this life, not just the next. A great mystery is revealed, "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). This hope is for today. It is for the New Year. It is the grace to face whatever uncertainties, challenges, or goodbyes 2019 may bring. This hope you have is the anchor of your soul. You cannot live without hope.


Williams...

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tion of hemp growing. Hemp will be legal at a federal level, although it will still be heavily regulated. Hemp can be a valuable fiber crop for farmers. It remains to be seen how this will come about, as regulation and enforcement will present some new challenges.

There is a lot more to the farm bill than what I have talked about here. If you have more questions about the farm bill, contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

**Bell Ringing Union
County Old Courthouse**



January 2, 2019
In memory of
Virginia B. Meeks
Birthday
by Ginger and Terry Meeks

January 21, 2019
In memory of
Dollie C. Meeks
Anniversary
by Ginger and Terry Meeks

**Bell ringing information
at 706-745-5493**