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are grateful for the opportunity to partner with the local school system to promote excellence not only in academics, but in athletics, character, and community service. We are confident that the outstanding students being recognized today will be our future community leaders and business owners of tomorrow. It is for that reason, we are excited to encourage their continued success in academics, community service, leadership, and extracurricular activities.

As we head into spring, I want to make sure that everyone knows about our Spring Fling Fashion Show. Since our first fashion show last fall

was a tremendous success, we thought spring would be a wonderful time for our retail businesses to showcase the latest trends in clothing, shoes, and accessories for 2019.

The event, held at the Union County Community Center on March 13 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m., will feature items from four of our local merchants; Alexander's, Blue Ridge Cotton Company, Pat's Hallmark, and From Me 2 U. The cost to attend is \$12 and includes an all-inclusive lunch.

For more information or to register to attend, please call the Chamber at 706-745-5789 or sign up online at visitblairsvillega.com.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

his socks or underwear wrong side out. So, we are checking to make sure you put them on right." The funeral director said, "But, you can't...". Then he was interrupted by the son pulling a 44 magnum from his pocket and after pointing the gun at the funeral director the young man said, "Yes I can".

After leaving his first wife the now dead man had moved to Florida and took up with another woman. They raised a family in the swamps of north Florida. Before, the man died he requested that he be buried back home in Georgia. During the funeral my father read the obituary which listed his family and of course everyone was confused. This was especially true when his first wife was mentioned. The same article called the second wife and mother to the second set of siblings as a very good friend of the deceased man.

After the funeral my father walked down the aisle leading the family and the deceased man to the front of the church. Daddy opened the door of the hearse and waited for the casket to be placed inside. At this point the 6 sons of the deceased man took the casket away from the pall bearers and placed the coffin in the back of a red pick-up truck. The funeral director approached the young

men and said, "You can't...". The young man pulled out the gun and the funeral director said, "Yes, you can".

The sight of a red Dodge pick-up truck leading a funeral procession while hauling 6 men and a casket must have been quite the spectacle. The family from north Florida said, "Their Daddy always wanted his body to be hauled to the graveyard in the back of a red truck and no highfalutin funeral director was going to stop them." To top it all off the sound system of the truck was blaring a duet of George Jones and Tammy Wynette singing the man's favorite song "The Race is On and Here Comes a Heartache".

After the funeral was over one of the sons asked my Dad where he got the information regarding his family. He was told it came from obituary given to him by the Funeral Director. This fellow immediately accosted the director and before long both families were embroiled in a testy discussion. Dad and the Funeral Director eased away from the discussion and watched as the families began to argue and then fight. Eventually, the Sherriff was called and 13 members from both sides were arrested. This man who loved George Jones and Tammy Wynette had quite the send off!

Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

all their social media accounts and you know your child. You know your child is not perfect, but you just know that they would never put their future or safety at risk by experimenting with drugs. There is nothing worse than being blindsided by what you know, and I see parents all too often that are devastated by their child's drug use who have shared this exact story with me.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the most influential person in your child's life is their peers. Your child is learning about alcohol and drug use from other children in their social environment. The stories that are told, the impressions that are made by their peers are subconsciously becoming your child's version of the truth about alcohol and drugs. As parents, the most powerful tool we have to debunk these false truths that our children are exposed to is communication.

Open and honest communication that includes active listening with a relaxed and casual attitude is the most effective way to get your child talking to you about what they know about drugs and alcohol. A good way to start is just by asking questions like, "What are some positive things that you have heard about drinking alcohol?" or "What do you know about marijuana?", then listen with a nonjudgmental and neutral attitude. Your child may not open up entirely on the first attempt but believe it or not, they are craving direction from you so keep the conversation going.

The goal for parents in these conversations is to remain open to your child's response and follow up with clear expectations that you have about alcohol or drug use including the consequences that will follow if they choose to use alcohol or drugs. This is a good time to put accountability measures

in place that will encourage your child to successfully walk away from a situation where they are offered or pressured to use drugs or alcohol. Discuss peer pressure and let your child know that you understand about the need to be accepted by your peers. If you feel comfortable share a personal experience about a time that you caved to peer pressure and explain how that negatively impacted your life. Follow up with the importance of being an independent thinker and the dangers of compromising yourself just to fit in. Remember that you are trying to have a conversation with your child, and you are not just talking to your child.

There are many online resources available to help parents learn how to start these hard conversations. For example, www.drugabuse.gov, has an entire series of online publications dedicated to talking to your children about drugs and alcohol use. There are also pamphlets available that are age appropriate for your adolescent or teen. These publications provide facts about different drugs and the short-term and long-term effects of using these drugs. This provides your child with unbiased facts, void of scare tactics or a tone of authority that tend to tap into a child's rebellion. Armed with the facts about drugs of abuse and the risk involved with using them could reduce your child's risk of experimenting with these high-risk substances during their formative years.

It is important to remember that this is not a once and done conversation and it could take time to for your child to open up to you about this subject. Do not confuse their participation in the conversation with the impact the effort has on them. Even if they are not talking to you, they are hearing you but most importantly they are feeling your desire to connect with them on their level.

Apply now for Beta Epsilon Educator Scholarship

The Future Key Woman Educator Scholarship is awarded by Beta Epsilon chapter of Psi State - Georgia of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

This chapter includes members from Fannin, Towns and Union counties. The scholarship is awarded to a female resident of one of these three counties who is a rising junior or senior at the college or university level in an accredited education program who has demonstrated high academic achievement, leadership experience, in-

volvement in extracurricular activities, community and civic involvement, and a commitment to pursue a degree in education. The 2019 scholarship amount is \$1000.

The deadline for completed application is February 28, 2019 and successful applicants will be notified by April 1, 2019. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The application is available at www.deltakappagamma.org/GA-betaepsilon/scholarship.htm. For more information, please email be.psi.dkg@gmail.com.

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removal of snow and ice around the outlet to the outside. Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Maintain heating equip-

Schilling...

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ment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional. Turn portable electric heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room. Use portable space heaters with an automatic shut off so if they're tipped over they will shut off.

Plug power cords directly into outlets and never into an extension cord. Inspect for cracked or damaged, broken plugs or loose connections. Always use the proper fuel in a fuel burning heater as specified by the manufacturer. When refueling, allow the appliance to cool and refuel outside or in a well-ventilated area.

When using the heater, open a window to ensure proper ventilation. In portable kerosene or other liquid-fueled space heaters, always use the proper grade of the proper fuel. All new unvented gas-fired space heaters have an oxygen depletion sensor that detects a reduced level of oxygen in the area where the heater is operating and shuts off the heater before a hazardous level of carbon monoxide accumulates. If you have an older heater without this feature, replace it.

If the pilot light of your gas heater goes out, allow 5 minutes or more for the gas to go away before trying again, do not allow gas to accumulate, and light the match before you turn on the gas to the pilot to avoid risk of flashback. If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not attempt to light the appliance. Turn off all the controls and open doors and windows.

What have we done to our own educational system? The Los Angeles School District is on strike, second largest in the nation. Why? Not for higher pay, but for reducing class sizes, for proper funding for basic school supplies. To allow teachers to do their jobs more effectively.

When I began architecture school at Iowa State in 1959, the yearly tuition was \$231, which I could easily make with a summer job at \$1 per hour. Now, it's almost \$6,000. My daughter's tuition at UGA is almost \$10,000 per year. Why? Because neither Congress nor Republican-dominated state legislatures want to subsidize higher education any more than they want to properly fund K-12. So, college graduates are burdened with outrageous debt on their student loans for years -- except for the wealthiest.

When a country like Finland can find the resources to provide free public education K-12 and beyond, why can't the richest nation on the planet do the same? I guess it's the Marie Antoinette syndrome.

David Schilling

Williams...

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it's important to design pathways for the water from those impermeable surfaces to travel so that they can be deposited in a rain garden or pond. Rain gardens collect water allow the water to infiltrate back into the soil instead of having it run downhill. Usually they have plants that are adapted to living in damp soils.

If you have any questions about erosion or what you can do to prevent erosion at your property please contact your local Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Fowler...

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to face a health or financial crisis with faith, or to admit fault and make it right with humility. It takes courage to trust again when you know betrayal, or to speak and live truth when the culture knows only feelings.

You have access to courage that is beyond your own capacity. Hear the words of God: "Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Josh. 1:9). Amen.

Dyer...

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ventilation; pulling hose; establishing a water supply; operating a fire apparatus; and transporting water to the scene.

Structure fires are one of our most challenging incidents that we face. It takes a group effort and a lot of work to control these incidents. We are very proud of the response that we have had, and we want to thank everyone for the support that they provide to the department.

Union County Fire Department ~ Our Family Protecting Your Family ~

Bluegrass Jam

Looking for porch pickers and singers of unplugged, acoustic bluegrass music. Central Blairsville location, March 10. Call Michael Allen at 706-781-0959 for info.

Call a gas service person.

Install a wood burning stove, chimney connectors and chimneys following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation. Wood stoves should bear the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

In wood stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets. Start the fire with newspaper or kindling, never with a flammable liquid, such as lighter fluid, kerosene, or gasoline. Keep the doors of your wood stove closed unless loading or stoking the live fire. Allow ashes to cool before disposing. Dispose of ashes in

a tightly covered metal (never plastic!) container and keep the ash container at least 10 feet away from the home and any other nearby buildings. Douse and saturate with water. Chimneys and vents need to be cleaned and inspected at least once a year by a professional.

Heaters are just "Contained Fire" trying to get out into our flammable things, and it only takes one mistake to let the fire escape into our homes. Think safety because the home you save might be yours!

For more information on heater safety, contact your local Fire Department or Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Council at: info.ccrd@gmail.com.