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just may legally be a “public” road because the public has utilized the road over many years for access and it cannot legally be closed.

**Q. Does the county have markers on roads so that the public knows which roads are county maintained?**

A. Through a tremendous effort over the past several years, we have successfully identified county maintained roads with a green road sign and private roads with a blue road sign. When you purchase property in our county or any other county, this should be a

question you have answered either by your realtor, attorney, or by contacting the local courthouse before purchasing property. If you purchase property in a private development, you should be sure that if the road is not a county road, that there is either a homeowner’s association, or some other process for providing for the future maintenance of the roads.

If you have any other questions regarding roads, feel free to contact the Commissioner’s office at 706-439-6000 or the Road Department at 706-439-6062.

**Cummings... continued from Page 4A**

he remembered his dad’s words “That blue granite is too slick for my liking”.

As Patrick’s foot touched the rock he slipped and fell launching his body into the pothole. It was only a 3 foot drop and he thought he would be able to catch himself before going into the chute. But, the water was too fast and immediately he found himself cascading down the long s-shaped chute into a rhododendron tunnel. At the end Patrick was launched over a 10 foot drop

and into the hole his dad was fishing. He let out a war hoop and hit the water with a huge splash. As he popped out of the water he noticed his dad looking at him while a “Winston” cigarette dangled from his lips. All was silent for a moment. Finally, Bill said, “Patrick Fix, I have had you in the woods since you were 3. I have trained you in all the ways I know about these mountains and just look at you. Sometimes I wonder if you could have possibly come from my loins”.

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the next training begins, please let us know!

If you are interested in growing vegetables in your garden this year, please join extension for our annual Northeast Georgia Vegetable Production Meeting. This year, the meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 14th from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center. There is no cost to register, and lunch will be provided courtesy

of the White County Farmers’ Exchange. Topics will include suggested vegetable varieties for our North Georgia climate, soil nutrient management, best management practices in pest management, and an update on the pesticide applicator’s licensing requirements and procedures.

Please RSVP to the Union County Extension Office at 706-439-6030 by March 10th.

**Gibson ... continued from Page 4A**

there are effective ways to reduce littering. First, aggressively enforce state laws and local ordinances prohibiting littering and requiring that loads be covered. A commercial trash hauler from Fannin County operates in our area. On 2/14 he was driving an open-bed pickup with 20-25 bags of trash piled haphazardly on the back with no cover. As he drove by my work place in the 5000 block of Gumlog Road, a full bag blew off. I recovered that one, but he “lost” another a quarter mile later and scavengers ripped it apart spreading the contents over a 25-yard area. (I have more similar stories). If Sheriffs Clinton and Mason would assign deputies to regularly monitor incoming trash haulers at the transfer stations, issuing warning tickets for first offences and payable tickets for subsequent ones, I guarantee that would reduce roadside litter.

Second, actively and seriously promote “Adopt a Highway.” Merchants who

profit from fast food and alcohol sales whose packaging make up much of the litter, as well as churches, businesses, civic groups, schools, governmental agencies and private citizens could be encouraged to “adopt a highway”. An exemplary place where this program works is a stretch of Old Hwy 64 out of Hayesville, maintained by Cantrell Body Shop. Notably, in Cherokee County, NC both the County Sheriff and City Police Departments have adopted sections of badly littered roadways in their area (would be great to see ours do likewise). I will buy a “picker upper” for any deputy or public official who joins me on the roadside.

Third, conduct county-wide litter pickups every March and September. Get good leaders and feature their smiling faces in front-page newspaper articles. The choice is ours! We can continue to be inundated with trash or get serious and reduce it.

**Wm. Ronald Gibson**

**Dyer ... continued from Page 5A**

members who are not fully equipped. The team has been planning and creating a team equipment list which includes the needed team and support equipment to safely conduct significant water rescue. The team is planning on purchasing this equipment sometime this year.

Rescue is a major component of Union County Fire Department and swiftwater rescue incidents have increased over the last few years. The department is making every effort to be prepared by training per-

sonnel and obtaining the needed equipment to better respond to these emergencies.

A fundraiser for equipment will be held at Zaxby’s of 195 Highway 515, Blairsville on March 14th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Swiftwater Rescue Team will receive 10% of the proceeds. The team members will be there to provide information about swiftwater rescue. Come out and support your Swiftwater Rescue Team.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

**Chandler ... continued from Page 5A**

lies are in their prime acquisition years. These middle-aged parents have the disposable income and educated sensibility to want the best for their children. They buy the latest technology with impunity: new computers, DVD players, home theater systems, and video games. They take advantage of their rustic locales by camping, boating, and fishing. Secondly, the focus is entrepreneurs/small business. Entrepreneurship is defined as someone who exercises initiative by organizing a venture to take benefit of an opportunity and, as the decision maker, decides what, how, and how much of a good or service will be produced. To be concise, the goal is to have a younger family demographic move in and have small businesses creating jobs simultaneously.

The next step was to create an internal mission statement and an external tagline and logo. The Positioning Statements guide our marketing and operating decisions. Our Positioning Statement reads: The growing entrepreneur or small business owner can escape to a thriving community surrounded by natural beauty. Blairsville-Union County offers everything you need to grow your family and your business—delivering strong business support, a top five school system, and endless community and recreational

amenities. The growing entrepreneur can escape, discover, and thrive in Blairsville-Union County. A tagline is a succinct phrase situated under or alongside your logo that communicates a single but powerful brand message designed to resonate strongly with an intended audience. #BelieveIt

Arriving in Blairsville always makes one stop and say “I can’t believe this.” Ice Climbing, the Appalachian Trail, an airport in the valley, near a big casino, new businesses opening every week, unparalleled views, moonshine, wine & grits, high speed fiber optic cable, Farmers Market, trails, a Georgia Top 5 School system, an award-winning hospital, a preserved and growing downtown, golf, farm to table, lakes, streams, headquarters for a large bank, friendly people. This list goes on. Well, it is not unbelievable. In fact, all you have to do is believe it. All this can be your story as you grow a business, plant your family, expand your opportunity, and improve your life. Blairsville – Union County. Believe It.

Part 2 will recap the implementation of the rebranding project. For more information about the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, call 706-745-5789 or go to VisitBlairsvilleGA.com.

**Drugs ... continued from Page 4A**

fewer than 10 employees, versus companies with 500 or more employees.

Based on data gathered by Quest Diagnostics, a leading drug testing laboratory, of the estimated 3 million full-time employees dependent on illicit drug use, more than half are employed by small establishments.

When should a drug test be performed? Because every business and workforce is unique, employers should make a careful determination about which drug testing program elements are most beneficial for their workplace.

According to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, about 43 percent of full-time U.S. employees work for companies that do drug testing before hiring. Substance abuse tends to be more common among younger, less-educated workers from lower-income households and more prevalent in men than in women.

The food service and construction industries have the highest rates of substance abuse among workers. The fields of education, social services and protective services have the lowest rates.

A typical workplace drug testing program includes pre-employment testing, post-accident testing or “post-incident” testing and reasonable suspicion testing, also referred to as “for-cause” testing. An employer also may decide to include periodic testing, return-to-duty testing and follow-up testing as part of its workplace testing program.

Another workplace program element is random testing, or “spot testing.” Using a random selection process - for example, one that is computer-generated - the employer determines the frequency and percentage of the workforce to be tested. Random testing is usually more effective at detecting and deterring drug use than pre-employment testing because employees do not know when they may be selected for testing.

When asked if they drug test, many employers will answer “yes,” but very few can name the substances actually being tested. The five-panel drug test, which is the most common employment drug test used, typically detects amphetamines; cocaine; natural opiates such as heroin and morphine; THC, or marijuana; and phencyclidine, or PCP. Frequently abused drugs such as prescription painkillers are not included as part of a typical five-panel test. Many employ-

ers are expanding their drug testing to include more popular abused substances such as benzodiazepines and the synthetic opiates, for example, hydrocodone and oxycodone.

What drug-test method is best? Although urine testing continues to be the most popular test method, hair testing is gaining in popularity, especially for pre-employment hiring.

J.B. Hunt Transport, a leading nationwide logistics firm, recently reported that it voluntarily conducted hair exams on driver applicants for more than 10 years, and in that time, more than 4,700 applicants who passed the government-required urine drug test were identified as illicit drug users by analysis of their hair samples.

Because hair testing shows repetitive drug use as far back as 90 days, it provides a more complete drug-use history. By comparison, urine detects recent or new drug use, typically in two to five days, and oral fluid detects recent drug use only in the previous 24 to 48 hours.

Here are some suggested best management practices for companies: 1) Implement a random testing program,

2) Upgrade your substance testing to include benzodiazepines and synthetic opiates, and 3) Consider hair testing for pre-employment, given its 90-day window of detection. Complete workplace programs also include regular education materials for employees and supervisors. This effort can help workers carry the message

home to their children. Most people agree that impaired workers are a threat to the workplace, the public and other employees. All employers should have workplace policies established with periodic reviews so their testing program, methods and tested substances are aligned with current drug-use trends.

**Barnes ...**

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kind of something as well before a pile up happens around those areas as well.

Thank you,  
**Delores Barnes**

**Fowler ...**

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12:2). He now offers to exchange his life for yours. Upon that transaction, you have the hope of eternity, which sets your present circumstances into perspective.

To endure suffering with grace is to move toward perfection. “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (Jam. 1:2-4). No one is immune from the troubles of life and the human condition. The question is, are you prepared to exhibit grace under pressure?

**Relay For Life April yard sale**



United Community Bank is sponsoring a yard sale to benefit our Relay For Life team. The sale will be held on April 22nd at the main office back parking lot from 8 a.m. to noon. Employees and non-employees are invited to participate so tell your friends and family. A donation of \$20 to the American Cancer Society Relay For Life will secure your space at the yard sale. The \$ you make at your site is 100% yours, so call and reserve your space today! Christi Lynch has graciously agreed to manage this project, give her a call or you can send her an e-mail.

Get motivated... get busy... clean out those closets, get rid of the clutter! Office 706-745-2151; christi\_lynch@ucbi.com.