

The Dispatcher

Most of the information that I write about has to do with the fire department, emergency management or the firefighters.

A dispatcher's life is very similar to other public safety personnel; it is unusual. Dispatchers have a crazy work schedule and crazy hours as do all public safety. They have day shifts and night shifts. Each shift is 12 hours and there are several shifts per week.

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief David Dyer



If you think the schedule is stressful, you should see the actual work. The dispatch center is considered the central hub for all communications and information for public safety.

When a person first walks into the dispatch center, one of the first things that they notice are the six monitors at each dispatch station. Each monitor provides different information that the dispatcher uses to locate callers, dispatch calls, search for information and track the responding units.

One motor vehicle accident, for example, can result in several 911 calls at one time. The dispatcher must collect the information and dispatch the appropriate units which may include law enforcement, fire and rescue, ambulance, GSP, and wrecker services.

See Dyer, page 5A

Mister Rogers

What TV personality walks into the house, removes his jacket and dons a colorful cardigan, then puts on his sneakers, all while singing a song? Of course it's Mister Rogers. Fred McFeeley Rogers didn't create a character for TV. He believed children could spot a phony, so he was just himself.

All Things New Wayne Fowler



Rogers said, "I went into television because I hated it so, and I thought there's some way of using this fabulous instrument to nurture those who would watch and listen." TV still needs the spirit of Fred Rogers. We lost this cultural icon in 2003.

Rogers graduated from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1963. After ordination by the Presbyterian Church, his ministry was to children and families through mass media.

He based his show on the deeply Christian themes of neighbor, love, and acceptance. His goal was to make children feel valuable and loved, and to help them cope with simply growing up, and the complexities of life with grownups.

Jesus spoke on neighborliness with a story about the Good Samaritan (Luke 10). His challenge is to be a neighbor especially to those in need. Rogers appealed to the human need to belong, to be part of a community, at the beginning of each episode.

Jesus said that the greatest commandments are to love God, and to love your neighbor (Matt. 22:36-40). He demonstrated love and acceptance while calling people to faith and holiness.

See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

Q. We continue to see a lot of trash and trash bags on the side of the highway. Can the county not do anything about this? It is ruining the beauty of our county.

A. I can assure you that NO ONE is more frustrated with the continued littering that is happening in our county than me. I hate to waste taxpayer money on picking up litter that has no business being on the side of the road in the first place.

Q. What is causing the litter and who is doing it?

A. Not all littering is malicious or done intentionally, but never the less it is happening. We are in the process of narrowing it down to where it comes from exactly.

1 - Commercial Haulers either do not have their loads covered or once dumping at the Transfer Station, they do not clean out the truck. As soon as they pull out on to Deep South Farm Road the left-over trash and paper starts blowing out.

2 - Trash is blowing out the back of pickup trucks. We probably have more pickup trucks in the county per capita than most counties. We know that much of the trash is coming from construction sites or from just around people's homes. Guys will throw an empty pack of cigarettes, fast food bags, or empty grocery bags in the back of their pickups to keep from throwing it on the ground (which is good) either on the job site or at home.

3 - Full trash bags are blowing off of trailers, commercial haulers and pickups. Often, they hit the highway and break apart or the next car hits them. In just a couple of hours that one bag is scattered all up and down the highway.

Q & A from Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris



See Paris, page 5A

Athel

Athel was a first cousin to my MawMaw Adams, and she was my mother's best friend.

Athel was the type of person that made something positive out of a tragedy filled life. Athel's mother was Malvie Motes. Malvie was a younger sister of my great grandmother Alvie.

Around The Farm Mickey Cummings

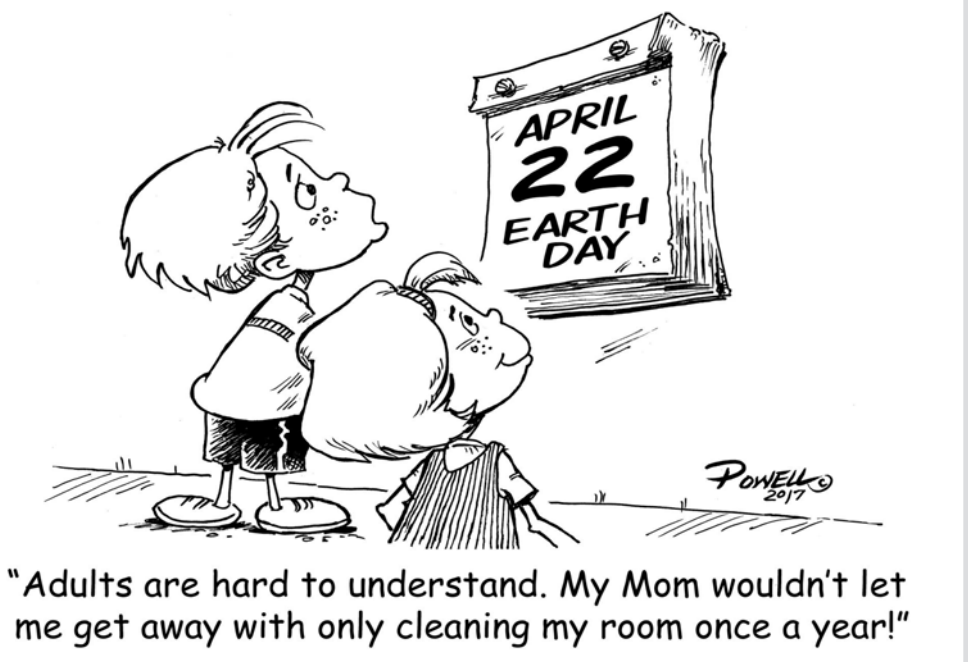


Everyone thought that Malvie and Tom made quite the couple. Young Tom was an aspiring preacher and Malvie was a person that trusted everyone. After a few months of marriage young Tom was soon tempted by another woman and left a young and expecting Malvie. Soon Malvie gave birth to a beautiful little girl she named Athel.

People would tell Malvie that her estranged husband was seeing other women. But, she always said, "Tom loves me and someday he'll come home".

Athel was taken in by her Aunt Alvie and Uncle Charlie Baker. These were the grandparents to my mother. Mom said, "I always enjoyed visiting my grandparents because Athel was living with them. She was 10 years older than me and would take me for walks. On a particular walk I got stuck in a mud hole causing my shoes to come off. Ethel pulled me out and retrieved my shoes. Then she cleaned them off with her sweater. I can remember walking by Dad Baker's (Charlie) apple tree. Dad always told his grandkids to stay away from his apples".

See Cummings, page 5A



"Adults are hard to understand. My Mom wouldn't let me get away with only cleaning my room once a year!"

Letters to the Editor...

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. You can help.

Dear Editor,

As the first full week of Child Abuse Prevention Month passes, we're sharing the ways people can get involved to prevent child abuse in our communities. One way you can have an impact is to be knowledgeable about the signs of child abuse and what you can do to intervene safely and get help on behalf of another child.

Know the signs of child abuse and neglect. We know child abuse and neglect happens in our communities. In fact, there were 217 abused/neglected children in the Enotah Judicial Circuit. There are different warning signs for different kinds of abuse and neglect. However, there are some indicators that can signal abuse in any form. Some of the major signs are when a child:

Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance; Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention; Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen; Lacks adult supervision; and Appears afraid or hesitant to go home after school.

It's very important to note that none of these signs prove that child abuse is happening. Any one of these indicators can be found in any parent or child at one time or another. However, when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination, that is a good time to take a second look.

What can I do if I think a child is being

See Child Abuse, page 5A

Social Security

Dear Editor,

Remember, not only did you and I contribute to Social Security but your employer did, too, which totaled 15% of your income before taxes.

If you averaged only \$30k over your working life, that's close to \$220,500.

Read that again.

Did you see where the Government paid in one, single penny? We're talking about the money that you and your employer put into a Government "bank" to ensure you and me that we would have a retirement check from the money that we "contributed."

Why do our "representatives" to the Congress refer to the money that we put in as an "entitlement"?

If you calculate the future value of \$4,500 per year, based on flat income of \$30k — yours and your employer's contribution — that money, invested at a simple 5% interest (which is less than the Government pays on money that it borrows), after 49 years of working, you'd have accumulated \$892,919.98.

Read that again.

If you took out only 3% per year, you'd receive \$26,787.60 per year — if you retired at 65, it would last better than 30 years — and

See Mitchell, page 5A

The Sky is Falling

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank Ms. Brumit for her response to my letter last week, however, I must point out a couple of things.

First, I didn't mention climate change which is probably the most important issue of all. It's not necessary to believe in climate change - it's not a religion so belief is not necessary - all you need to do is study the science. Unfortunately, President Trump doesn't believe in science at all so he has stopped all efforts to combat climate change and unfortunately, again we are at a tipping point where if we don't act now it may be too late. If all the land ice melts, which it could over the next century if we take no action now, sea level could rise between 250 and 300 feet. This would mean virtually all of Florida would be gone along with New Orleans, New York, Charleston and most of our sea coast cities. We should all buy future ocean front land below Dublin, GA.

The other thing is your concern about abortion. While I agree this is a very poor method of birth control, I'm not a woman so it could never affect me directly so it is none of my business. Trump claims to be pro-life but when he was married to his first wife he got Marla Maples his future second wife pregnant and strongly encouraged her to have an abortion, she refused so I would question his true feelings! He married Marla a month after Tiffany Trump was born.

Luther Elder

Health Care

Dear Editor,

The political rhetoric regarding health has changed from Repeal Obamacare to repeal and replace. The first attempt to replace by the Trump administration went down even before a vote was cast. He initially threatened to walk away like it was a bad hotel, now there is a new plan to try to replace the ACA. The problem is Paul Ryan and his fellow House of Representatives friends are opposed to any role for government in healthcare. They voted repeatedly over the last seven years to repeal the ACA. They would like to cut Medicaid and they have their eyes on Social Security and Medicare.

These people full of anti-regulation zeal and ideological purity are not looking out for us. What they have accomplished is to undermine parts of the ACA and spread enough chaos and uncertainty that insurers will avoid the exchanges.

Health care is about one sixth of our economy. Insurance is cheaper when the pool is large. The first year or so a previously uninsured person is covered is expensive. Health screenings and treatment for conditions they might have been trying to "live with" can be costly, but in the long run save money. Better treatment, fewer expensive ER visits and better compliance

See Compton, page 5A

The State of Tourism in Blairsville-Union County: Part 2

In 2016 the Tourism Division of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce began the implementation of the Community Rebranding project. A well-rounded and detailed plan was designed and ready for execution. There are many parts and pieces that go into rebranding a community. Internally, all of our literature and collateral needed to be updated. Some of these include nametags, business cards, signature tags and promotional pieces like t-shirts, hats, and pens. We also updated the Visitor's Guide and post cards that are sent out to all of the Welcome Centers around the state, other Chambers, and to leads that we receive from advertising.

Externally, there was a mandatory refresh of our website. From color scheme to layout and verbiage, an overhaul was completed in early May.

See Chandler, page 5A

Blairsville - Union County Chamber Tourism Director Tobie Chandler



Tent Caterpillars and other pests

Many of you may have noticed large webworms forming on tree branches in your yard and along roads. These are not the work of some enormous mystery spider, but a type of insect called tent caterpillars. These critters are the larvae of a type of moth and hatch in early spring. Tent caterpillars produce silk from their salivary glands in their mouths, and they use this silk to create the protective "tents" we see in the trees right now.

While these insects do not kill the trees in which they live, many people find the nests unsightly, and the caterpillars can strip branches of their leaves. There are two main varieties of tent caterpillars that we will find in our area: the forest tent caterpillar and the eastern tent caterpillar. The nests of these two larvae are very difficult to tell apart as they both tend to inhabit the crotches of trees, but their markings make it easy to distinguish them from each other. The eastern tent caterpillar has a broad white stripe bordered by two thin yellow stripes extending down the length of its back. The forest tent caterpillar looks similar but instead of a stripe, it has white and black spots along its back. Both caterpillars are mostly blue-gray and covered with thin hairs. There is only one generation of these pests every year, so you will only see their nests form in the early spring.

Another common tent-forming pest is the fall webworm which is typically a problem later in the summer. Webworms create their silken nests at the ends of branches instead of at branch unions, often killing all of the leaves and new growth within the nest. The larvae have long, thin hairs and have two rows of black spots extending down their backs. Unlike tent caterpillars, webworms have multiple generations throughout the year and can do much more damage.

If you have a tree that has become home to some of these pests, the first course of action is to remove the affected branches. Manual removal should always be your first course of action, but if the nest is out of reach or on a major branch that cannot be removed, pesticides may be required. If possible, damage the nest and crush what caterpillars you can before spraying to make the nest as vulnerable as possible to the insecticide. The silk of these tents is so tightly woven that it can be difficult for sprays to penetrate, so opening the webs will help ensure the pesticide comes into contact with the caterpillars. Carbaryl and acephate are two solutions that have been proven effective not only against both varieties of tent caterpillars, but also fall webworm and other pests such as bagworm moths.

Though tent caterpillars and webworms seldom cause enough damage to completely kill a tree, they do feed on the leaves and cause a

From the Ground Up Melissa Mattee



See Mattee, page 5A

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