

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Inspections, Testing and Maintenance

If you own a home or a vehicle, you are familiar with the numerous activities that you must perform to keep them inspected and maintained. The fire department, with the responsibility of life safety, is constantly inspecting and maintaining equipment and apparatus. There is routine inspections and maintenance which are completed every day. There is also periodic inspections and maintenance which are performed depending on hours or time of the year.

Routine inspection and maintenance activities are performed each shift. Firefighters inspect and check-off each apparatus and every piece of equipment that is on each apparatus. They visually inspect the equipment and perform various checks to ensure that the equipment is in working order.

Every saw, power unit, generator, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), turnout gear and numerous other equipment are all run through the paces. If there is any small maintenance that must be completed to the apparatus or equipment, the firefighters will perform that as well. Volunteers also complete these inspections, checkoffs, and maintenance several times each month at the volunteer stations.

Periodic inspections and maintenance are performed as needed or when the equipment or apparatus reaches certain criteria such as hours of use or date. These are major inspections, testing and maintenance which can be performed by the firefighters or by a third party. They include apparatus pump testing, extrication tools servicing, ladder maintenance, hose testing, SCBA testing, SCBA bottle testing, and many more.

Recently, we completed the SCBA bottle testing which is called hydrostatic testing. Hydrostatic testing is a nondestructive test to ensure the integrity of pressurized cylinders. This test must be performed every three to five years depending on the type of bottle. We had over 200 bottles tested by a third party to ensure that the bottles are safe and able to handle the high pressure of up to 4500 psi of air.

Another major inspection and testing completed recently was on the ladder apparatus. The ladder apparatus must be inspected every 10 hours of ladder use and after every major fire. We performed

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Patience

We live in a hurry up, instant gratification world. It's easy to become caught up in that, to your own detriment. It helps to have a reminder once in a while. Here's yours for today: Patience.

The human brain is wired to prioritize the present. Neuroscientists say that when humans anticipate an immediate reward, we get a dopamine hit. Thinking of your favorite dessert or an impulse buy might do the trick. Neurochemicals in the brain influence how we think, what we do, and how we feel about it. Sometimes that's good.

Psychologists study how our unchecked brains make judgements quickly, irrationally. But we can force ourselves to think slowly and more analytically so that our "heuristic" (rules of thumb) don't hijack our thoughts and beliefs.

We should not be surprised that science has again verified the Christian worldview. We live in a fallen world and in fallen earth suits (bodies). We already knew our thinking can be impatient and self-destructive. "Nothing good dwells in my flesh" (Rom. 7:18), Paul wrote. It is particularly not good if your flesh drives you to wonder, "If God is there why doesn't He do something? Now!"

If anyone, Joseph could have fallen into that trap. He received a dream that he would arise to a place of authority. His brothers despised him, and sold him as a slave. His owner liked him, but the wife like him a little too much. So he went to prison. And waited. Years go by. During that time, "The word of the Lord tested him" (Psa. 105:19). He passed the test of patience when Pharaoh made him ruler of Egypt. He learned patience the hard way, and God used that to prepare him for his life's work.

Paul suffered much abuse to advance the news about Jesus. He said, "We were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life ... so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead" (1 Cor. 1:8-9). Paul lived to see the gospel of Christ begin to change the culture. Patience is easier when you trust the God who can raise the dead and change the world.

"Right," you say. "If I knew things would turn out like Joseph and Paul, I'd be patient too!" Listen, you know enough.

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Is the county still working on having property owners of distressed buildings clean up?

A. Yes, the Building Inspection and Development office has been working very hard on this. We implemented this program a little over a year ago, and they have made a lot of improvements. Most of the property owners who have received notices have worked well with the Building Inspection and Development office, but there are a few that have taken a little more discussion to get things brought up to standard.

Q. I have reported the same property several times and it has still not been cleaned up. Why?

A. Whenever a complaint is made, it is written up and the Building and Development office will make a visit to the location and do an inspection. After the inspection is complete, a determination is made of whether the property owners need to be contacted or not. Sometimes what you may perceive as not being cleaned up may not be your neighbor's perception or reality. That is why we have the Building Inspection and Development office do an inspection and have guidelines in place to answer these questions.

If the owners need to be contacted, they must be given thirty days' notice once the letter is received. There are circumstances that can delay clean up. For example, sometimes it is a rental property and we have to work with the owner who may be out of state. The owner may be elderly and can't manage the work on their own. They may be ill or not financially able to afford the clean-up. The Building office always looks at each circumstance on a case-by-case basis and works with the owner as much as possible to assist them if needed. So we do ask you to be patient with the county employees who are working on these complaints, as they are working as fast as they can, while also inspecting homes all over the county.

Q. What if you find an actual health hazard or danger with a distressed property?

A. The county employees that handle these complaints will assess the danger/hazard according to risk, and will take the necessary precautions to advise the property owner. Our county employees are trained to handle a wide variety of situations, and have

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Drug Free Mountain Life

The Importance of Early Prevention

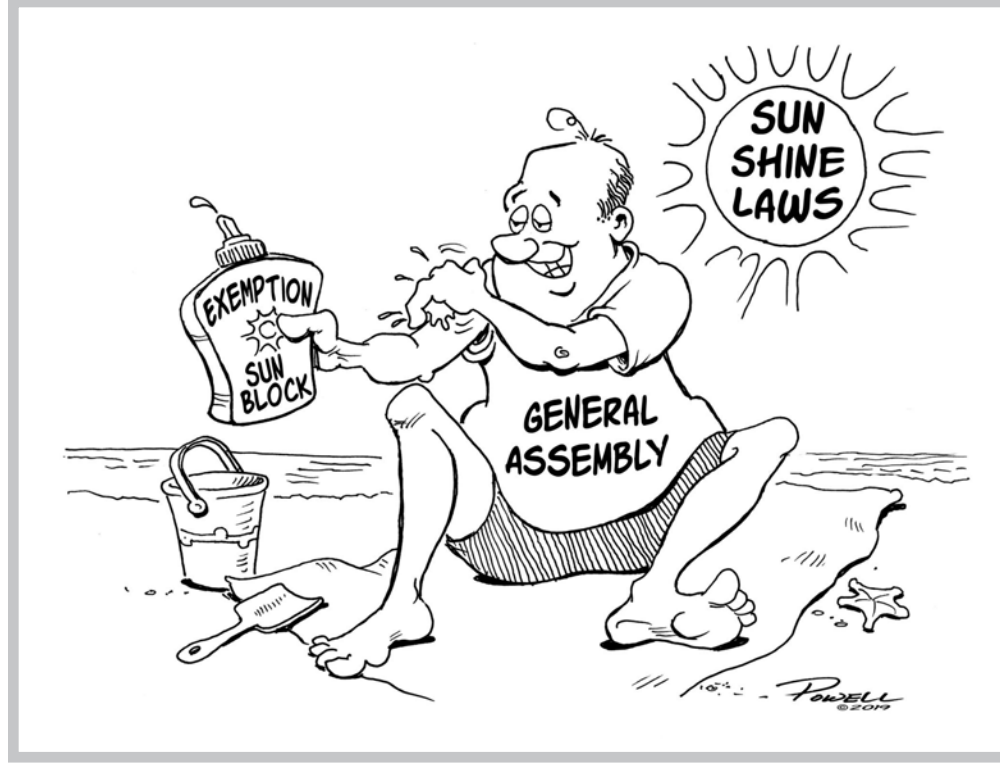
Why is adolescence a critical time for preventing drug addiction? Early use of drugs increases a person's chances of becoming addicted.

Remember, drugs change the brain — and this can lead to addiction and other serious problems. So, preventing early use of drugs or alcohol may go a long way in reducing these risks.

The DRUG FREE MOUNTAIN LIFE campaign supports an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families, and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse.

Risk of drug use increases greatly during times of transition. For an adult, a divorce or loss of a job may increase the risk of drug use. For a teenager, risky times include moving, family divorce, or changing schools. When children advance from elementary through middle school, they face new and challenging social, family, and academic situations. Often during this period, children are exposed to substances such as cigarettes and alcohol for the first time. When they enter high school, teens may encounter

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Chamber of Commerce

We've had another full week at the Chamber! One of our highlights was getting to announce the winner of our Fourth of July raffle, Kathie McMillian. Kathie purchased her winning ticket at the Union County Farmers Market on a rainy Tuesday afternoon, not expecting to win anything. She simply bought a ticket to support the Chamber and the fireworks display. We know there were many of you who did the same, and we are so grateful for the generous support this community offers towards financing the fireworks each year. Without people like you, Kathie, and our local sponsors, these events would not be possible. I understand Kathie is looking forward to going out on her new kayak, but that her daughter has already claimed the Yeti cooler!

If you did not get the chance to purchase a Red, White & Blairsville T-shirt, now is your chance! Due to such a high demand, we will be reordering a limited number of adult sizes soon.

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President

Steve Rowe



Letters to the Editor

A Shoutout to Old Union Golf Course

Dear Editor,

We want to publicly acknowledge and thank Old Union Golf Course, Mr. Gary Davenport and Mr. Cameron Forrest for their support and encouragement for our newly formed ladies golf league, Old Union Women's Golf Association. Thank you, thank you!

During early April 2019, we reached out to Cameron Forrest, Director of Golf at Old Union, to discuss the possibility of starting a ladies' league. For many of the ladies, Old Union is a long golf course that would discourage some of them from participating. Mr. Forrest and the Georgia State Golf Association worked with us to shorten the course and create a new tee box. The new tee box is called "Silver Tees" and is available on league day.

Mr. Forrest also offered us the flat rate of \$20 for ladies day (Monday), making it an affordable and fun play day. There are many other perks and benefits at Old Union, too many to mention in this acknowledgement letter! But due to their support for our league, in one month, the average number of players attending on league day is between 20 and 24 ladies, with approximately 35 current members.

Thank you Mr. Davenport and Mr. Forrest for your support in Union County and for our ladies' league. Through both of you, we have made new friends and made Mondays a fun-filled day with golf, laughter and friendship.

Sincerely,
The League Ladies from Old Union Golf Course

Ferst Concert Success

Dear Editor,

Thank you to the North Georgia News for providing the great coverage for our Ferst Concert fundraiser. We appreciate the newspaper's willingness to support Ferst Readers by using its resources to get the event information to the community. And thank you to West Printing.

The concert was a huge success. The monies made will be used to fund free books for the 437-plus registered children in Union County. Studies show that children who are read to at home are more successful when they begin school.

The Ferst Readers Community Action Team is committed to promoting literacy in young children ages 0 to 5, and the newspaper's support is making this possible.

**Janice Cochran, Co-chair
Martha Davenport, Co-chair
Ferst Readers of Union County**

Georgia Mountain Fair

Summer in the mountains for many people means getting away from the hustle and bustle of the city to the cool, calming scenery of the Blue Ridge Mountains, with the clear creeks running over moss-covered rocks and Laurel and Rhododendron blooming along the roads and streams.

Those of us who are lucky enough to live here know that we live in paradise and enjoy it every day no matter the season, but we don't talk about it too much, because then everybody would want to live here. A bad day in the mountains is better than a good day anywhere else.

I remember visiting my grandparents in the summers up here when I was young, and it was something I looked forward to all year long. It was a lot cooler than the hayfields in middle Georgia where I grew up. I fondly remember my grandfather taking me up Corbin Creek in his Jeep pickup before the Forest Service gravel road was built. We had to go up the river through the Miller place on a small Forest Service road to catch native trout in the small stream.

We also would go up Owl Creek in his Jeep pickup — which I still have — to let his Walker foxhounds out to run the fox on the slopes of the mountains, where he and a couple of his mountain buddies would build a fire and sit and listen to the hounds running the fox. Could have been a mason jar there also, but I didn't have it at the time. They could tell which hound was baying and what they were doing. I think they were probably making it up, but it was a good way for me to spend a summer evening sitting by a campfire with no lights in sight and nothing but stars and moon overhead. When it was time to go home, Granddaddy would wipe his hands on a croker sack and leave it where they were sitting, and some of the dogs would come back and stay by his scent until he came back to get them. He had 20 or so most of the time.

We would then spend the next couple of days looking for the foxhounds that did not come back that night. I think it was just an excuse to get out of the house and away from Clemmie, who always something for him had to do. They lived here in the summers and Athens in the winter. This is where he grew up in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Mountain Scene, which is where we live now on his old farm. He was the first County Agent in the county in 1914, so my roots go way back and deep.

I also remember going across the road with them to Mt. Zion Baptist Church to plan the river community's Georgia Mountain Fair exhibit. Back then it was held in the high school, and

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RC&D Executive Director

Frank Riley



The Swimming Hole

My grandfather, Columbus, was raised with a bunch of his cousins and friends just outside of Phil Campbell, Alabama, in a little community called Trapptown. The people of this little community were extremely close, and they managed to enjoy life even though the country was in turmoil due to the Depression. The boys of the family enjoyed playing baseball, fishing in the creek, coon hunting, and in the summertime, they swam at the mill pond on Cummings Creek.

During the 1930s, parents were very conservative with their children. You never saw a girl wearing a pair of shorts. Young men and women didn't go on dates by themselves. Boys and girls didn't go swimming together. The young people around the little community of Trapptown had different swimming times for the "Swimming Hole on Cummings Creek."

Actually, the boys didn't even wear bathing suits. So, the boys swam from 1:30 until 3:30. After the boys left, the girls would swim until 5:30. This arrangement allowed the boys and girls to swim for the same amount of time, and it worked well for most of Coon's teenage years. But, then Coon began to notice girls. There were three girls in the community who were sisters. Even though the girls had been a part of Papa's life since he could remember, he'd never noticed them. But, one day all of a sudden, he noticed the Lauderdale Girls, and they were beautiful. That is when the trouble began.

One particularly hot day during the Dog Days of August, the boys were having a great time at the swimming hole. When it came time for the boys to get out of the water so the girls could swim, they refused. The girls hollered at them from the top of the bluff, "Your time is up. It's time for us girls to swim." Papa said, "We just laughed and kept swimming." Not only were the Lauderdale Girls pretty, but, they were also smart.

While the boys were still swimming, the Lauderdale Girls slipped down to where they had left their clothes. The eldest girl knew Papa was the ringleader of the boys. So, Sarah placed her underwear in the bib pocket of Papa's overalls. After a while, Coon and his brothers got out of the water, put on their clothes and made their way home. By the time they got home it was supertime. When Papa and his brothers walked into the house, their mother, Laura, told them to take off their dirty clothes and place them on the back porch. Coon was bad about leaving items in his pocket. So, Laura went through his pockets after he had left them on the porch. She found

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Rosette Rose Disease

Rosette Rose Disease is a serious disease that is infecting rose plants. It's a viral disease that I've seen in Towns and Union counties. It can spread rapidly and kill rose plants within a couple of year of infection. Let's talk about rosette rose disease, how to spot it, and what you can do about it.

Rosette rose disease was first found in California and Wyoming back in 1941. Since then it has spread towards the east. Rosette rose disease also infects wild roses. This is most likely the way that the disease travels. It can infect all roses and is particularly lethal to multiflora roses, which are a species of wild roses.

Mites primarily carry the disease. The eriophyid mite will feed on an infected rose. That mite will then move to an uninfected rose and pass the pathogen onto the new rose plant. Once a rose plant is infected, the pathogen travels throughout the plant. The mites will often feed on new growth of buds, stems, and leaf petioles. These mites are so small that they're not visible to the naked eye. They ride on the wind to spread from plant to plant. It's also possible for humans to vector the disease through grafting and pruning with tools that have the virus on them. Therefore, if you are pruning roses it's a good practice to clean your tools with alcohol between plants.

The symptoms of rosette rose disease are usually quite clear. The shoots and foliage will have an unusual red color; the stems will look thick and succulent with long shoots. There will also be an overabundance of small, pliable thorns on the stems. New growth on the plant may have a witches broom appearance, meaning it has many branches close together.

Rosette rose disease only affects roses. However, it is a viral disease, meaning that if your rose bushes get it, they can't be cured. There are no resistant varieties available on the market. There are some that are in research trials, so hopefully within a few years those will be commercially available. Since there is no cure let's talk about how you can prevent your roses from contracting the disease.

The best place to start is by planting disease free material. Avoid buying plants that already look stressed and might be showing symptoms of the disease. When planting the roses leave space between plants so that the leaves and stems aren't overlapping. This will make it a bit more difficult for the mites to travel between plants. Finally, if possible, remove wild roses from within 100 yards of your roses. This is not

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Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



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