

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Preparedness Continues

We are in the last week of National Preparedness Month, and we want to remind everyone that September is a good time for people to discuss emergencies and disasters as well as begin to prepare for them. The main theme for this year is "Disasters Happen. Prepare Now. Learn How." Each week of September is broken down into themes to bring awareness to each preparedness issue. We have discussed the themes for Week One, "Make a Plan and Practice it," and Week Two, "Learn Life-saving Skills." There are two other themes we want everyone to be aware of: "Check Your Insurance Coverage" and "Save for an Emergency."

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Week Three's theme, "Check Your Coverage," refers to your insurance coverage. According to FEMA, more than half of all homeowners do not carry adequate insurance coverage to replace their home and contents should a disaster occur. Homeowners should take time to document the home and its contents prior to a disaster. This documentation will be helpful with insurance claims and replacement. Construction materials and contents of the home can change value, so homeowners should evaluate their insurance and policy each year to understand their coverage and to ensure that they are properly covered.

Week Four's theme is "Save For an Emergency." Saving for an emergency and being financially prepared may prevent long-term financial hardship after a disaster. Many people live paycheck to paycheck. A disaster or even a small emergency can be financially overwhelming. People should ensure that they are properly covered with insurance and save for such emergencies. This savings can be useful until insurance has an opportunity to help and replace belongings. People should also have a small amount of cash on hand in the event of a power outage or electronic banking is not working.

One other consideration when planning for a disaster is to have important documents secured and in a safe place. Some people are now scanning important documents and saving them on jump drives, external hard drives or cloud-based systems. Important documents include driver's licenses, birth certificates, insurance policies, addresses and telephone numbers, tax information and medical information.

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Perspective

For a while, Hurricane Florence was larger than the states of North and South Carolina combined. I was amazed at the geostationary satellite images from 22,000 miles above the equator. I was pained at the local images of flooding and destruction that satellites cannot capture. Different perspectives, different responses.

In 1990, Bette Midler recorded the song, "From a Distance." The lyrics explain "from a distance the world looks blue and green. From a distance there is harmony. From a distance we all have enough and no one is in need and there are no guns, no bombs and no disease. God is watching us from a distance." So, if we back off far enough, we won't see problems anymore because, after all, that's what God does? That's one perspective, I suppose.

Maybe time lends perspective. We can learn from the past, and with time we might make more sense of it. But C. S. Lewis opined that God would have people "concerned either with eternity (which means being concerned with Him) or with the present - either meditating on their eternal union with, or separation from, Himself, or else obeying the present voice of conscience, bearing the present cross, receiving the present grace, giving thanks for the present pleasure." He warns against dwelling on the past, and temptations focused on the future: fear, greed and lust.

So, distance and time are not reliable ways to reset your perspective. I'm thinking of another song, recorded by Amy Grant at age 18. "She's got her Father's eyes; eyes that find the good in things when good is not around; eyes that find the source of help when help just can't be found; eyes full of compassion seeing every pain, knowing what you're going through and feeling it the same."

God doesn't watch from a distance. He became flesh and dwelled among us. The widow burying her only son and the distressed and dispirited people He saw with compassion. A rich young man captivated by his possessions, He saw with love. His dead friend Lazarus and the city of Jerusalem filled His eyes with wet grief, even though He is the Resurrection and Peace, their only Hope. (John 1:14, Luke 7:13, Matt. 9:36, Mark 10:21, John

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



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Commissioner's Questions

Q. What is this National Test I have been hearing about on the radio and on Facebook?

A. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Communications Commissioner (FCC) will conduct a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) on Oct. 3, 2018. The WEA portion of the test will start at 2:18 p.m. and the EAS portion will follow at 2:20 p.m. This test is necessary to assess the operational readiness of the infrastructure for the distribution of a national message and to determine if improvements are needed. The message will state: "This is a test of the National Wireless Emergency Alert System. No action is needed." This is all part of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System or IPAWS.

Q. What exactly is the IPAWS System?

A. IPAWS is a national system for local alerting. It provides the means for disseminating authenticated emergency alert and warning messaging from emergency officials to the public through:

- Radio and television via the Emergency Alert System (EAS);
- Wireless phones via Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs);
- NOAA All Hazards Weather Radio via IPAWS-NOAA gateway; and
- Internet applications and websites via the IPAWS Alerts Feed.

The FEMA IPAWS Program is responsible for implementing a national public alert and warning system, ensuring that the president can send alert and warning messages to the public under all conditions, and enabling its use by federal, state, local, tribal and territorial officials during local emergencies. Executive Order 13407 tasked the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to assign FEMA with developing, operating, integrating and maintaining IPAWS, plus future connections alerting technologies.

Q. What is the difference between the two alerts that will be sent out?

A. The Emergency Alert System or EAS is used by alert-

Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



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Drug Free Mountain Life

Marijuana: What's the Big Deal?

It turns out that the brain of an adolescent or young adult is still growing, and therefore on a mission to increase efficiency and to develop critical skills related to problem-solving, impulse control, anticipating consequences and more. Marijuana can get in the way of this development, causing brain circuits to wire in a less optimal way.

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.

One way to think about this is comparing the developing brain and its neural connections to your home electrical wiring grid. You want the best possible wiring for your house so that when you need to use your appliances, everything works as it should with no shorts or blown fuses. The house can still function if everything isn't up to code, but it won't be ideal. Marijuana use can impact the wiring of the brain in a similar way, with the impact being subtle in some cases and more severe in others.

According to the CDC, marijuana use may See Drug Free, page 5A

Letters to the Editor

Thank You

I am taking this opportunity to thank you and the staff of the North Georgia News and West Printing for all the services and assistance you have provided to Allegheny Lodge #114. As you know, we are a fraternal organization dedicated to serving the citizens, more especially the children, of Blairsville and Union County.

We assist people by holding numerous charity fundraisers to raise money to provide scholarships, school supplies, and during the Christmas Season, food and gifts for those families who might otherwise not be able to have those things the rest of us enjoy so much.

Every time we hold a fundraising event, we require one or more of the services your companies provide. You and your staff are always there to pitch in and lend a hand in the design, printing and publishing of posters, tickets and brochures. You usually provide those services, supplies and products at little or no cost to the Lodge, thereby allowing us to keep the overhead

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A Good Laugh

I would like to thank the author of the Sept. 19 letter to the editor titled "Interpret" for the laughter he afforded me with his letter. The last half of the last, very long sentence, "I plan to withhold judgment," was a hoot! The title at the top, which again read "Interpret," should have been "Judgment." I am soon to be 85 years old, and I know judgmental when I see it!

Jean M. Holsapple

The Old Trickle Down

I anticipate an increase in my cost of living due to the increase in cost of goods that will result in raised tariffs on imported products. You know, that old trickle-down theory. If retailers must pay more for the things they sell, I'm sure they are not going to take a hit on profit. They will increase the price of goods. The largest sellers of imported merchandise from China will surely raise the price on Chinese trinkets. Farmers are getting a few billion dollars in bailout money from the Government, which I must pay - the Government lives on taxes from me. They will give this bailout to farmers to make up for the increase on export tariffs, which the Government imposed. Can anyone say catch-22? Can this trickle-down be reversed and start trickling up? Maybe I need a bailout. I hope they trust my accounting when I tell them how much I need. I'm sure our Government will listen to my plea.

Charles Sowers

Letters to the Editor

Let Medicare Negotiate

President Trump has promised to lower drug prices, but nearly two years later prescriptions are still really expensive.

No one should have to choose between filling a prescription and paying for groceries or rent, but sadly this is the reality for far too many of America's seniors.

The Medicare Negotiation and Competitive Licensing Act (H.R. 6505) is a common-sense reform to lower drug prices for America's seniors while making sure seniors keep access to the medicines they need.

When we vote this fall, we should remember who supports Medicare negotiation and who does not.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Gierach

Sometimes, people forget to say "Thank You."

I needed help when my wife of 48 years just passed away. I haven't a clue in the world how to use a computer to locate the data that will assist me with bonds.

Banks will tell you that it takes too long and days to complete. With that being said, I introduced myself to the Regional President at United Community Bank. He had the data in my hands within five working days.

To Andrew M. Williams... thank you!

Frank Hines
Force Recon Marine
100% Disabled, Vietnam 1965-1967

A Response to "Interpret"

This forum is a valuable venue to share information and thoughts in a respectful and congenial way, and I would like to respectfully respond to a writer in last week's newspaper concerning his theory that Republicans want Judge Brett Kavanaugh on the U.S. Supreme Court so that he would have "leeway" to rule on cases based on his religious background.

This is absolutely NOT true. All we require of a Supreme Court justice is that he/she be a Constitutional judge, not creating "new laws," but rather ruling on existing laws. That includes the 10th Amendment, which clearly states: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." This has been abused over the years to allow the federal government to grow to a larger

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Them's the Two Meanest Boys

I have told you before about my family's politics. As a reminder, many in the family were staunch Republicans. Just prior to the war and during the Depression, my great uncle, Pickens, supported FDR. He always said, "Hoover got us into the Depression and Roosevelt led us out of the Depression and through the war." But most of the family were and still are staunch Republicans. Clifford Hyde, my great grandfather, wouldn't vote for relatives that ran on the Democratic ticket. Clifford's wife, Effie Franks Hyde, was the same way. Papa said he never met a Franks that wasn't a Republican.

Luther Franks was a distant relative of Effie and therefore also related to my grandmother, Glenna Hyde Cummings. Luther owned a little country store on the banks of Cummings Creek. The store was located on the road to Phil Campbell. When my father was a little boy, his family was regular customers of Luther and Evie Franks. Daddy said, "We loved to aggravate Luther. So, we'd go into his store and ask to borrow his cap. Bud would always readjust the band on the cap to make it bigger or smaller than it was supposed to be and then give it back to Luther. We'd always laugh when Luther would put the hat back on, because it would fall down over his ears or it would sit right on top of his head."

Luther was only 5 feet tall, so sometimes Uncle Bud would use a long stick and place the hat on the top shelf in the store. The little man would spend the next 20 minutes walking around looking for his hat. When he would ask Dad or Bud about the hat, the boys would tell him they had not seen the hat. After, he would exclaim, "Evie, them's the two meanest boys whatever was." In response, she would wrap her arms around Dad and Uncle Bud and say, "Luther, these boys are little angels."

One fall day, Paul and Bud were staying with the Franks because Papa and Granny had business in town. Evie and the two young boys went out to the hen house to feed the chickens and found one of her chickens dead. She asked the two boys if they would help her to bury the hen. The three dug a grave and the boys fetched up a tombstone. The hen was placed into the tomb and was covered with soil. The kindly old lady told the boys to bow their heads while she prayed the saddest prayer you'd ever heard. Upon completion of the prayer, she led the boys in a rendition of "Shall We Gather At The River." Next, they sang a verse of another song, "I will meet you in the morning over there." Luther heard all the sad singing and walked up to find all three of

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Wells and Flooding

A lot of people around here use well water. Drinking water from a fresh mountain well can be very refreshing. While it may seem like well water is a pure source, it's important to know that there are some ways that it can be contaminated. One of those is by flooding. We have had a lot of rainfall this year, and our neighbors to the north have experienced a lot of flooding, so it's good to know what flooding can do to your well so that you can maintain that pristine mountain drinking water.

After a flood event, the first thing to do is inspect your well. Check the well head to see if large debris has struck it that could loosen or displace well materials. It's also possible that sediment has been deposited in the well if the well is not properly sealed. Shallow wells (less than 50 feet) and wells more than 10 years old are more susceptible to contamination from surface water that contains bacteria and other contaminants.

The second item to inspect on your well is the electrical system. Make sure that the electrical system is OFF, either at the breaker or that it is unplugged. Check for moisture in the pump's electrical box and have the wiring checked by a qualified electrician if the electrical system was flooded.

The third and final thing to check is the well pump. Sediment and floodwater can damage the valves and gears of the pump. Contact a licensed water well contractor or certified pump installer for assistance in cleaning and repairing the pump. If the pump is not properly cleaned and lubricated, it can burn out.

Surface water from floods can carry bacteria that contaminate your well. Before using the water after a flood event, remove the floodwater from the well. To do this, determine the depth of the water in your well. Measure the distance from ground level to water level. Subtract this number from the well depth to have the depth of water. Multiply the depth of water by the storage capacity per foot or your well. If you don't know this value, contact the company that installed your well or your local Extension Office. Now you have the volume of water in your well. Run an outside faucet to discard two to three times the volume of water in your well. If your pump can't maintain the flow long enough to discharge all the water, let the well recharge and begin pumping again until you have discharged the recommended amount of water.

After you have discharged the well, follow the protocol outlined in the UGA Extension Circular 858-4 for shock chlorination. Shock chlor-

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber
Steve Rowe



Chamber of Commerce

October has some wonderful opportunities to learn from two engaging speakers that will be presenting at the Chamber. An open invitation is extended to everyone in the community to attend both of these upcoming events.

You won't want to miss our Annual Power Lunch, sponsored by Southern Bank and Trust, on Oct. 3 at the Union County Community Center. Everyone is invited to join us for a wonderful lunch catered by The View Grill. The event begins at 11:45 a.m. with lunch and networking and ends at 1 p.m. after our speaker has concluded.

We are excited to announce that former Chick-fil-A executive Barry White will be sharing at our lunch this year. Mr. White began his career with Chick-fil-A in May of 1986 and recently retired in February of 2017. He had many responsibilities in his 30-plus years of working in the Marketing Department. Barry was very involved with the field marketing department.

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UGA Extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West
Publisher/Owner

Shawn Jarrard
Editor

Derek Richards
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Sports Editor

Mark Smith
Staff Writer

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer

Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m. • Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - One Year \$40. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1987, at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.

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