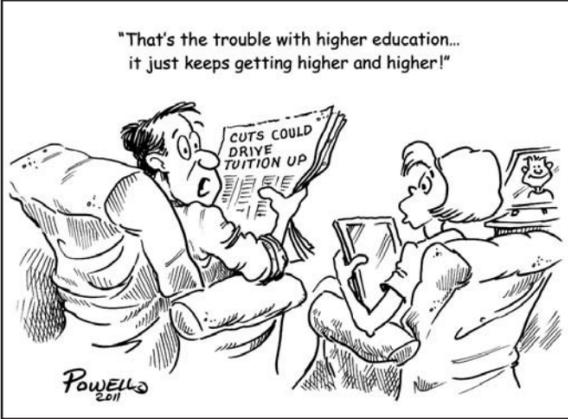


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



## Letters to The Editor

### Letter To The Editor

Once again I am renewing. I have been receiving the paper a little bit more often, but still miss a week quite often, as you will recall two times I called long distance to complain.

I was born in 1918 in the Hightower section and moved to the Hog Creek section in 1920. I graduated from Towns Co. High School in 1934. It had been a state school since 1930. Before it was operated by Ga. Baptist Assoc. and the tuition was \$3 per month.

Unless Viola Ellis is still living, I am the only one of a class of 19 that is still living. I moved with my husband, Earl Barrett, to Washington State in July of 1941. My maiden name was Garrett and my mother was a Shook. I have cousins and other relatives there and still love the place and think of it as home. It grieves me to read of all the foreclosures each week. I truly wish someone could start a business or so. Tourism is not enough. I vividly recall the Great Depression and it actually brought a little more money in to Towns County after President FDR sought to help the economy with his multiple efforts. Before a few men worked in logging camps and peas were planted to pick in the fall. Necessities were bought with a few eggs from the chickens every one kept.

The building of Lake Chatuge can be compared to the effect of giving a very sick person a blood transfusion. Maybe another miracle will happen and some one will recognize the willing and trustworthy workers living in Towns County. I hope so.

My childhood home was at the foot of the Ramey Mountain and still in my mind I can look up and see the Ramey.

Best Wishes,  
Alva G. Barrett



**RARE KIDS;  
WELL DONE**  
By Don Jacobsen

Last week I started my rant about the damage tv can do to kids. Let me have another go at it.

In a study published in the Journal of Pediatrics in August 2007, researchers found that, among babies ages 8 to 16 months, every hour spent daily watching programs such as Brainy Baby or Baby Einstein actually translated into six to eight fewer words in their vocabularies as compared with other children their age. Read that again; it's huge. TV is obviously a lousy babysitter.

I've been talking about preschoolers, infants, and the under 3's, but television is also a factor in the development of kids much later than 3 as well. The incidence of erratic childhood behavior and lowered academic performance have virtually paralleled the penetration of television into America's homes. As the presence of television has grown, so have the symptoms of its ill effects. What does television viewing do to kids as they move toward and through the elementary grades? Short answer: It affects every facet of life of those who are "heavy"

(code word for "watches a lot") TV viewers. It affects their use of time. Their health. Their weight. Social skills. Family relationships. Spare time options (think hobbies, sports, music, reading, exercise, fresh air, thinking). Academics. Vocabulary growth. The whole span of life for growing kids.

And no wonder; that's where America's kids live—TVville. It's pervasive. It's intrusive. The elephant in the den. The 800-pound gorilla. America's typical earlitesens will watch more than 8,000 hours of television by the time they finish sixth grade. That's more time than they'll spend on any other single activity they have done in their waking hours. In fact, it's 1,600 more hours than they will have spent in school. Sixteen hundred hours is forty 40-hour weeks!

"But, Dr Don, my kids would have a fit if I tried to change their television habits." Ah, but leadership parents are driven by a dream and often make difficult, unpopular decisions to accomplish long-term goals. That's why they have Rare Kids; Well Done!

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon @

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

We have grown weary of hearing about how our economy is improving, how the recession ended months ago and how we are going to "grow our way out" of economic hardship. We are equally weary of dire predictions of imminent economic and social collapse. These are half truths and political expediencies. The truth, as usual, is somewhere in the middle of the extremes.

A quick look at the numbers this week should make the case. Numbers can be used for deception when they are overlaid by punditry, but taken in undiluted doses they can bring us closer to the truth than most of the popular interpretations now being used to sell soap on television. Here we go, and hold onto your hats:

The number of people on food stamps is now approximately 43.2 million – an all time high at 14 percent of the population. The U.S. Conference of mayors reports that visits to soup kitchens are up 24 percent this year and there are over 643,000 people seeking shelter in cities every night. The number of people on unemployment has dropped to 9.4 percent – because so many people have dropped out of the system completely. The percentage of working age men over 20 has dropped to 73.6, the lowest rate since this data began being collected in 1948. The percentage of unemployed who have been out of work for over six months now stands at 42 percent, a number we haven't seen since World War II. Finally, the Gini coefficient, which is used to measure income inequality, has grown to 46.8 percent – a number we have not seen since the "Roaring Twenties," right before the Great Depression.

Former Labor Secretary, Robert Reich, succinctly tells the rest of the story: "Corporate America is in a V-shaped recovery. That's great news for investors whose savings are mainly in stocks and bonds, and for executives and Wall Street traders. But most American workers are trapped in an L-shaped recovery."

The student of history and economics may note that the Gini coefficient is a

good predictor of social unrest. If we connect the dots we see that bank failures in the Great Depression were due, in part, to the expansion of credit to struggling farmers which was a political solution to the Populist movement of that era. As we have observed before, when history does not repeat itself, it often rhymes. The expansion of sub-prime credit of recent memory, whether or not it was a conscious effort to "buy off the poor," has contributed to a dynamic similar to that seen just before the crash of 1929. What is different this time around is the extent to which Globalization has contributed to the declining fortunes of half our population. Moving production to cheap labor countries has helped inflate corporate profits to all time highs, but it has trapped more and more people on the wrong side of the prosperity divide.

We do not know what solutions may be effective in addressing our current economic and potential social problems, but solutions to address our wounds are unlikely to be found in speeches and in the Band-Aids of symbolic legislation which Congresses passes to sustain the illusion that they are doing real work. Our system is out of balance and in need of correction, and to borrow a phrase from economist, Bill Bonner, we are in the midst of a "Great Correction." We do not believe our current government has the wherewithal to, by way of example, "pull off the Band-Aid" all at once. Instead we foresee a slow, painful, "hair by hair" removal.

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**"IT'S  
ON MY  
MIND.."**  
Danny  
H. Parris

**That Which Remains**  
It was twenty-two years ago this coming May that Regina and I moved to the mountains to make Blairsville our home. When we arrived we received a loving welcome and for over two decades we have been part of a gracious, loving and caring community. A lot has changed in Blairsville over these twenty-plus years—most of it has been for the good. There has been an increase in the population; new industries, new homes, new churches, new church buildings, better communication, improved roads, new schools and school buildings, up graded education methods, new, bigger and better medical facilities, a new nursing home, etc. When I push the rewind button back to 1989 and visit up to 2011, I am amazed at all the changes that have taken place here in this small mountain community. But one thing that has remained to this day that I am proudest of – we remain a loving and caring community. The GLENDA GOOCH HOUSE is just one visible demonstration of a loving community. Most of our North Georgia area is acquainted with the courageous brief life (22 years) of Glenda Gooch, daughter of Glendon and Chris Gooch. When I first met Glenda she was a four year old with a severe heart condition. In 1993, Christmas Eve night, I received an exciting phone call: "The Gooches are on their way to Egleston. Glenda is going to have a heart transplant, pray!" Of course, the surgery was successful

and God gave Glenda an additional fourteen years of life. Glenda and I had many things in common, not the least being brothers and sisters in Christ. Additionally, our birthdays were in the same month, and we were tenacious Georgia Bulldog Fans. I would brag to Glenda that all "good people" were born in April and were Georgia Bulldog Fans. She loved it. Now Glenda's earthly house is no longer with us for God took her to His heavenly house January 29, 2008. However, there is the GLENDA GOOCH HOUSE located at 324 Walling Road just a short distance from Union General Hospital. This house came to fruition through the efforts of friends and family throughout the area. The GLENDA GOOCH HOUSE is a tribute to the life and memory of Glenda. It serves as a loving ministry available for use by families of patients in Union General Hospital as well as local nursing and assisted living homes (Matthew 25:40). Union General Hospital owns the house but a board of directors is responsible for its daily operation and oversees all of its maintenance. This non-profit group looks to the community for the financial resources to maintain this free ministry to families. One major fund raiser is scheduled for February 18, at 12:15 p.m. at First Baptist Church. We are blessed to have the University of Georgia's head football coach, Mark Richt as guest speaker. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for those ages 6-17. All proceeds go to the GLENDA GOOCH HOUSE. Mark Richt is a great Christian individual that will inspire and bless your life. Glenda is no longer with us, but her life and ministry will remain through the ministry of the GLENDA GOOCH HOUSE.



## Community Calendar

**Towns County Water Board Meeting** 3rd Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.  
**Mountain Community Seniors** meet the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 2 p.m.  
**Towns County Democratic Party** meets the 2nd Thursday of every month. Please call Kim Bailey at 706-994-2727 or 706-896-6747 for details.  
**Towns County Republican Party** meets the 4th Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Daniels Steak House. Dinner at 6 p.m., 706-896-7281.  
**Towns County Planning Commission** is held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Courthouse.  
**Towns County Commissioners** meeting is the 3rd Thursday at 5:30 p.m. in the courthouse.  
**School Board Meeting**, 2nd Monday each month at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.  
**Hiawassee City Council** 1st Tuesday of month 4 p.m., at City Hall.  
**Young Harris City Council**, 1st Tuesday of month at 7 p.m., Young Harris City Hall.  
**The Hiwassee River Valley Kennel Club** meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st Monday of each month at Brother's Restaurant on Hwy 64 in Murphy, NC. Call President Kit Miracle: 706-492-5253 or Peggy Moorman: 828-835-1082.  
**The Unicoy Masonic Lodge #259** meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.  
**Stephens Lodge #414 F & AM** meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in Young Harris.  
**Board of Voter Registrars** meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month

at 4:30 p.m., Courthouse.  
**Towns County Board of Elections** holds its monthly meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. at the Elections Office (Old Rock Jail).  
**Towns County Historical Society** meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 5 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 1182, Hiawassee, GA 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org  
**Bridge Players** intermediate level meets at 12:45 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Recreational Dept. Call Eden at 706-896-6921.  
**Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG)** meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, located at 308 Big Sky Drive (behind the Holiday Inn), Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m. & the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Contact us by calling 706-896-0932, mtntregartsandcraftsguild@hotmail.com.  
**VFW Post #7807 Fish Fry** will be 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, 4:30-7 p.m., \$9 a plate, all you can eat.  
**Mountain Computer User Group** meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Goolsby Center at YHC. Q & A at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.  
**FPL Retirees Breakfast** will meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Hole in the Wall Restaurant on the square in Blairsville at 9 a.m.  
**Chattahoochee-Nantahala Chapter, Trout Unlimited** meets 2nd Thursday of each month at Cadence Bank in Blairsville. 5 p.m. Fly Tying - 7 p.m. General Meeting. Everyone welcome.

www.ngatu692.com.  
**Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)** meets the 3rd Monday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call John Quinlan at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains.  
**Alcoholics Anonymous:** 24-hour phone line 828-837-4440.  
**Mothers of Preschoolers** meets on the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church office at 706-745-2469 for more information.  
**Chatuge Regional Hospital Auxiliary** on the 3rd Monday of each month, except the months of July, October and December, in the hospital cafeteria at 1:30 p.m.  
**Mountain Magic Table Tennis Club** meets 6 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Lee (828) 389-0924.  
**We do Family Oral History** of all of our residents. If you have not had your family history recorded and would like to do so, please call the Towns County Historical Society at 706-896-1060.  
**Fall Storytime** at Towns County Public Library Thursdays at 1 PM.  
**Prostate Cancer Support Group** meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 5-6 PM in the Cancer Treatment Center Auditorium in Blairsville. For more info call Steve 706-896-1064.  
**Mountain Coin Club** meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Blairsville Civic Center. Doors open at 5:30. Program and auction begins at 6:30. For more information, call Ye Old Coin Shop, 706-379-1488.

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