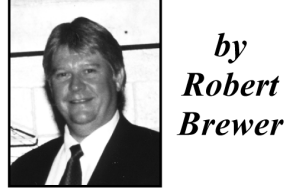


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Extension Tips



by  
**Robert Brewer**

### Backyard fruit trees need fertile soil, sunny location

Growing fruit trees in the home garden can be an enjoyable, relaxing and rewarding experience. However, success takes careful planning and hard work.

When planting fruit trees, it is important to consider site selection. Fruit trees should be planted in fertile, well-drained soil in a site that receives full sun. It is also important to consider fertility and soil pH. For fruit trees, the soil pH should be between 6.0 and 6.5.

Take a soil sample to determine the soil's fertility needs and pH. Do not put fertilizer in the planting hole or fertilize immediately after planting. Fertilizers in direct contact with young roots can burn and cause damage.

### Good root growth is essential

If purchased bare root, fruit trees are best planted in late fall or early winter. If plants are purchased in containers, they can be planted any time of the year. Just take care to add the needed water when there is not enough rain. University of Georgia Cooperative Extension experts recommends planting fruit trees during the winter months to achieve the best success of establishment.

Whether trees are purchased bare root or containerized, the planting hole should be at least two to three times the width of the root system.

Prune any damaged roots on bare plants and open up the root ball of container grown plants before planting. This prevents root circling.

Weeds and grasses that grow in the immediate area around fruit trees compete for both moisture and nutrients. One of the best methods of weed control is mulch. Place mulch in a ring 2 to 4 inches deep out around the tree drip line. Be sure to keep mulch several inches away from the trunk.

Avoid using hoes or string trimmers around trees. Hoeing can damage the root system and string trimmers can damage tree trunks.

### Fight pests

Without proper management, insects and diseases can seriously damage fruit trees and reduce production. Both inorganic and organic control products are available at most garden centers. Always read and follow label directions carefully.

Proper sanitation can reduce insect and disease problems. Apples, nectarines, peaches and pears should be thinned approximately four weeks after they bloom. Remaining fruit should be 4 to 6 inches apart. Remove dead, diseased or damaged wood, fruit and leaves from around fruit trees. This debris can provide overwintering sites for insects and diseases.

### Train and prune

Fruit trees need proper training and pruning for improved production. Pruning should be done during the winter months. Dormant or winter pruning consists of removing upright branches and any dead, diseased or damaged wood.

Gardeners who preplan should be rewarded with a bountiful harvest of fruit in coming years.

## From the Desk



Sheriff  
**Clinton**  
of  
**Towns**  
County

Property thefts are crimes that can be very personal and affect us on a human level. This is especially true when the theft comes in the form of burglary. When someone enters a person's home and goes through their personal belongings it can cause the victim to become very insecure inside their own home.

There are some things that you can do to help make your home safer. The following are just some ideas to make your home safer. They are offered as ideas and not an exhaustive list. The scope of this article is too limited to attempt to be all inclusive, but these ideas, if implemented, will certainly help.

You should always keep doors and window closed and locked while you're away. If you do not have one, install a deadbolt lock on all exterior doors. Deadbolt locks should have a one inch throw and a reinforced strike plate, which should be held in place with three inch screws.

If you have a garage with an automatic garage door, the door should be locked along with any exterior door. Burglars often carry electronic garage door openers and will ride through neighborhoods pressing the button and waiting for a garage door with the same frequency to open.

It is always a good idea when you are away to create the illusion that someone is home. You can buy timers at most hardware stores that will turn on lights, radios and televisions, at preset times. This will make you home appear to be occupied. These timers are typically cheap to buy and can help ward off potential thieves.

It is always a good idea to keep the area around your home well lighted. The last thing a burglar wants is to be seen committing the crime.

If you are going to

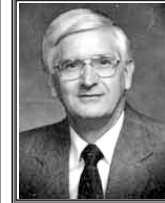
be away for several days it is always a good idea to have a trusted friend, family member, or neighbor to collect your mail for you while you are gone. Nothing says you are away to a burglar like a stuffed mail box and several days of uncollected newspapers.

Sometimes people leave messages on their phone that they are away on a trip. You should never do this. It is like placing and advertisement to a thief that your home is available for a burglary.

Always keep shrubbery trimmed away from entrances or walkways. Large hedges may be appealing to look at. Burglars find them very attractive as well because they provide them a safe passage to your doors and windows.

Probably one of the best ways to protect your home is to be a part of a Neighborhood Watch. Burglars know that alert neighborhoods are dangerous places to commit a crime. They would much rather go to another area where they are less likely to be caught.

The Sheriff's Office in Towns County offers free advice and training to help individuals and neighborhoods protect themselves from crime. If you would like more information please contact us at 706-896-4444.



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

### Experience

My dad always taught me that the school of experience was the greatest school of all. Experience applies whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, brief or long lasting, important or unimportant. Paul said, "...we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; hope (Rom. 5:3-4). Experience is what you get when you didn't get what you wanted. There is a difference between education and experience. Someone has well said, "Education is what you get when you read the fine print. Experience is what you get when you didn't." Experience is what is gained first hand. True, we should learn from other people's mistakes. In fact, we had better learn from other people's mistakes because we can't live long enough to make them all ourselves. It is also true that only some of us learn by other people's mistakes. The rest of us have to be the other people. If you are going through a tough valley of experience, I hope you will be encouraged by the following poem.

### Experience

I learn as the years roll onward  
And leave the past behind  
That much I have counted sorrow,  
But proves our God is kind,  
That many a flower I longed

for  
Had a hidden thorn of pain,  
And many a rugged bypath  
Led to fields of ripened grain.  
The clouds that cover the sun-  
shine  
They cannot banish the sun,  
And the earth shines out the  
brighter  
When the weary rain is done.  
We must stand in the deepest  
shadow  
To see the clearest light;  
And often from wrong's own  
darkness  
Comes the weary strength of  
right.  
We must live through the weary  
winter  
If we would value the spring,  
And the woods must be cold  
and silent,  
Before the robins sing.  
The flowers must be buried in  
darkness  
Before they can bud and  
bloom,  
And the sweetest and warmest  
sunshine  
Comes after the storm and  
gloom.  
So the heart from the hardest  
trial gains  
The purest joy of all,  
And from the lips that have  
tasted sadness  
The sweetest songs will fall,  
For as peace comes after suf-  
fering,  
And love is reward of pain.  
So after earth comes heaven,  
And out of our loss the gain.

-Author Unknown

## HAVE SOMETHING TO SELL?

Let the Herald work for you!  
**706-896-4454**



RARE KIDS;  
WELL DONE  
By Don Jacobsen

I generally don't put much stock in surveys, but recently I read one that got my attention. An organization named Public Agenda asked a group of more than 2,000 randomly chosen senior adults across the country to evaluate today's generation of kids - and their parents.

These unofficial judges decided that the two terms which best describe today's 5 - 12 year olds are "lacking discipline," and "spoiled." In answer to the question, "Do you think today's generation of kids will make our country a better place when they become grownups?" barely a third - 37% - said yes. So much for strong support from Grandma and Grandpa.

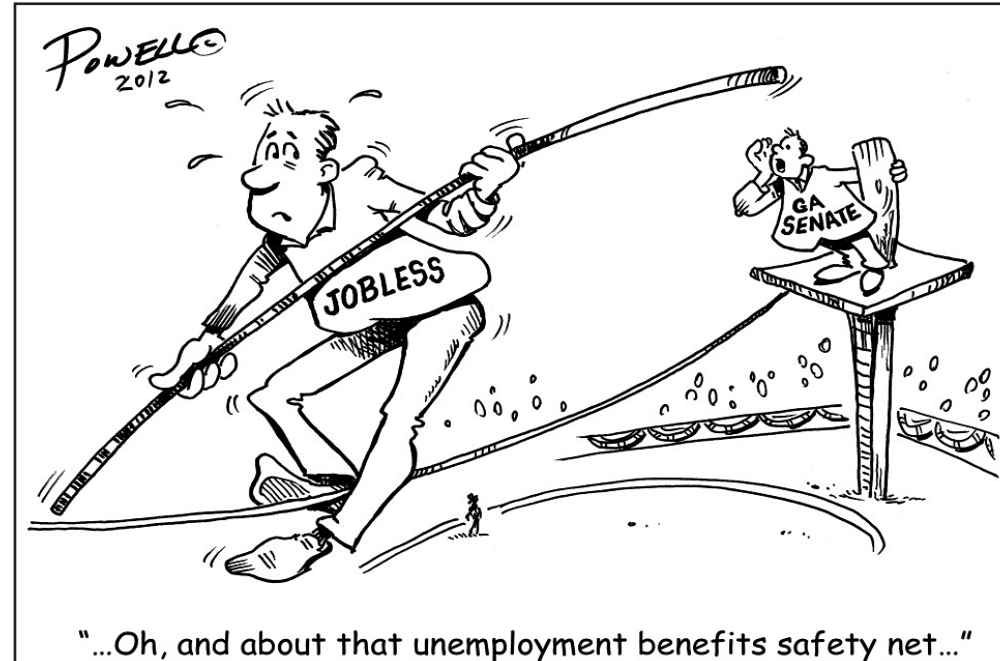
When asked why parents seem to be having such a difficult time with this generation of kids, a high percentage of those surveyed said they lay much of the blame on substance abuse and violence on the screen. We've talked about both of those issues in other editions of this column and I have no doubt that they are both factors to some degree. But not the most important.

Let me explain. About the time this generation's grandparents were beginning to raise families, there began to appear in America's parenting literature a serious shift in emphasis. Instead of the strong family values that had guided our parenting practices for two centuries, a new kind of lit-

erature began to appear from the parenting "experts." It reasoned that children should never be punished, should never be denied, should never be disappointed. Instead of an emphasis on character and obedience, the emphasis became that we should work to develop children with high self-esteem. Instead of learning respect and manners, children became the center of parental attention, and a new term - soccer mom - was coined to describe how the schedule of the family was now to be built around the interests of the children.

If Jarod intentionally scratches the neighbor's new car, said the experts, it is no doubt because mom and dad are not giving him good parenting, so Jarod is really a victim. Mom and dad were really the guilty ones, and if we're confused about who's to blame, it makes the problem very hard to fix. For eons, the Judeo-Christian approach was, "Children, obey your parents..." The new generation of counselors told us we should not insist on obedience from our children, but rather seek to discover why Jarod disobeyed and help him find new ways to work through his frustrations. No wonder the onlookers see our children as "lacking discipline," and "spoiled."

This issue is so basic to parental leadership I want to pick it up again next time. Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net.



"...Oh, and about that unemployment benefits safety net..."

# Community Calendar

**Towns County Water Board Meeting** 3rd Monday of each month at 7 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 at 5 PM at the Senior Center. Please call Kim Bailey at 706-994-2727 or 706-896-6747 for details.

**Towns County Republican Party** meets at 6: 30 PM the 2nd Thursday of each month at Daniels Steak House. For more info call 706-379-1371.

**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 Hiawassee 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 5:30 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.

**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, mtnregartscraftsguild.org. mtnregartscraftsguild@hotmail.com.

**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.

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.

**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.

**GMREC Native Plant Garden Tours:** Mondays 9 AM-1 PM, May-Sept. (except holidays). 706-745-2655.

**The Humane Society Mountain Shelter** Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at Cadence Bank in Blairsville.

**The Towns County Alzheimer's Support Group** meets the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM in the Family Life Center of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church. Caregivers or family members of those with dementia are encouraged to attend. For further information, call Carol at 706-896-6407.

**The Appalachian Shrine Club** meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Allegheny Lodge in Blairsville. For more info call William 706-994-6177.

**Georgia Mountain Writers Club** meets at St. Francis of Assisi Church the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 AM.

## Towns County Herald

Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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OFFICE LOCATED AT 446 NORTH MAIN STREET  
"THE MALL" HIAWASSEE (706) 896-4454

Publication Number 635540. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points.

EMAIL Address: tcherald@windstream.net

POSTMASTER: Send change of address to:  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD  
P.O. BOX 365 HIAWASSEE, GEORGIA 30546

DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWS COPY & ADVERTISING  
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