

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## From the Desk of:



**Sheriff Clinton of Towns County**

In 1732, James Oglethorpe was given a charter by King George II creating the Colony of Georgia. Not surprisingly, one of the very first things the colonists did was to choose a person, Peter Gordon, to perform the duties of Sheriff. This founded the Office of Sheriff in Chatham County, Georgia in 1732 (Georgia Sheriffs' Association).

A lot has changed in the 279 years since the founding of Georgia, and of the Office of Sheriff in Georgia, but much has remained the same. It is still the duty of the sheriff, to preserve the peace, while protecting the lives, persons, and property, of the citizens of each county. Much thought has been devoted to the best practices for accomplishing this mission.

With the advent of modern computer technology, we began to be able to track, and more importantly, share information about crime and criminal behavior. Keeping track of certain data, has given us a better understanding of certain patterns.

One topic that has become a chief concern for today's sheriff is that of the correlation between illegal drugs and crime. When one studies the crime statistics, such as arrests per year, and compares them to national census data, one realizes that only a small percentage of people commit 100% of the crime in America. When comparing this to the

Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) reports, one finds that the vast majority, as much as 90% of those arrested each year, are using illegal drugs at the time of the arrest.

In all that data, a pattern emerges -- a pattern that to me suggests that drugs and crime go hand in hand. With this as a starting point the Towns County Sheriff's Office began a campaign to target the illegal drug trade in Towns County. In the first two years of this administration, drug arrests were much higher than those in previous years, while crime rates dropped. This trend of lower crime rates has continued for nearly four years now. More and more over the last two years, we have noted that drug dealers have been getting the message and are more reluctant to buy, sell, or distribute their drugs inside Towns County.

While we recognize there will always be those who are willing to break the law, we also realize that our job is to reduce crime in the most efficient manner possible. Since 1732, sheriffs in Georgia have been given a challenge by the citizens they serve -- a challenge to do all they can to preserve the peace, and to protect lives, persons, and property. We at the Towns County Sheriff's Office are committed to meeting that challenge. We will do so while protecting the 99% who do not commit crimes from that one percent of malefactors that would cause our community harm and place our citizens' lives, property, and peace in jeopardy.

For more information about the Towns County Sheriff's Office, contact us by phone at 706-896-4444, or follow us online at [www.townscountysheriffsoffice.com](http://www.townscountysheriffsoffice.com).

## Extension Tips



by **Robert Brewer**

### 10 tips for beginning gardeners

1) Start small to keep from getting overwhelmed. Find out if you like gardening first. Later you can expand your garden size and plant collections. Plan a small garden space on paper. A plot about 20'x20' is plenty to begin experimenting with plants. Make sure it is in a place than can be expanded when you become addicted to gardening.

2) Grow easy plants. Marigolds, zinnias, snapdragons, pansies and sunflowers are good annuals for beginners. They come in enough colors and heights to not look repetitive in the garden, too. No-fuss vegetables are beans, tomatoes, lettuce and zucchini. Basil, dill and parsley are herbs that rarely fail. Bulbs planted in the fall will come up every spring and give you confidence in your gardening!

3) Read, read, read. Get as much information as you can before you start planning. Go to the library and look at gardening books and magazines. Home and garden magazines are also good sources for simple garden design and basic plants. Study the plants you want to grow, look at design ideas, and take notes, lots of notes. Seed catalogs are educational and free. Send away for as many as you can. Once you find ones you don't care for, you can have them cancelled.

4) Along those same lines, talk to your neighbor. Make him/her your mentor! Gardeners love to share their knowledge. Some of it may be a bit too advanced for you, so take more notes that you can refer to when you have some gardening experience under your belt. Talk to the people that work in nurseries and garden centers. They are there to help all gardeners, and they themselves have loads of experience. Call your county Extension office. This is the other gold mine of information. They can help with all aspects of gardening, from flowers to orchards.

5) Buy good tools. It is worth it to pay a little extra for better quality tools. Good tools will last for years if you take care of them properly.

6) Keep records in a garden journal. Write down what you've learned by reading and talking to other gardeners. Note plants that you like, and draw out your garden plan. Always do this in pencil, because garden plans are not static! The final garden may not be exactly like your original plan. Write down the varieties of plants, colors, heights, planting dates,

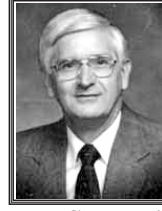
watering and fertilizing dates, and harvest dates and yields. Record the pests you encounter, such as bugs and their damage, and diseases your plants contract. Note the solution and where you found it (neighbor, book, garden center). You will learn faster if you have this information to refer back to. Always write down the weather, too. Rain, sun, snow, wind, cloud cover and temperatures go hand in hand with growing plants. You will know at a glance when you need to water if you have written down the last rainfall.

7) Start a compost pile. Make a ring of chicken wire about three feet in diameter, and fill it with grass clippings, leaves, and kitchen waste (no meat or dairy). If you chop these materials into small pieces, they will decompose faster. Water it down and turn it with a pitchfork to produce beautiful compost that you can add to your gardens or use as mulch. Compost is the best fertilizer for all plants.

8) Consider a job in horticulture to learn more. A full growing season on a landscaping crew will give you all the information you need about planting and maintaining gardens. A greenhouse job in winter and spring will teach you how to start your own plants. Working in a nursery is a great way to learn about plants best suited for your area. By talking to customers, you can find out what others are doing, and that will inspire you to experiment in your own garden.

9) Always wear sunscreen and a hat when you're outside for extended periods of time, even on hazy days. Be sure to drink plenty of water, too. The elements are hard on our bodies when we are exposed to them continually. In the heat of summer, garden early in the morning and just before evening. You can take a siesta or read more gardening books during the hot afternoon!

10) Most important -- have fun! Gardening is a relaxing past time that can become drudgery if you let it. Rewarding aspects of gardening are the beautiful flowers and scrumptious vegetables you are producing. Bonuses are watching birds and butterflies and bees being fed from your plot, watching the sunrise while you pull weeds, getting caught in an unexpected rain shower as you harvest tomatoes, and having friends ooh and aah at the fresh-picked bouquet on the kitchen table. If you are not having fun, you better find another hobby!



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

### Second is not first

I know that you must be impressed with that profound statement -- "Second is not first." The word second has a bad reputation among most of us. In fact, this generation has been labeled a "Me First" generation. It seems that second gets a bad rap everywhere. Second has never been first. It always comes next after first. It is inferior to the first; next to the best. We are so hung up on first that we almost choke when we have to say second. To some degree this makes sense, but not always. If we get hurt we want first aid not second aid. We have First Place diets but whoever heard of a second place diet? However, in baseball any batter had rather hit a double and be on second base, than hit a single and be on first. We talk in terms of First Family and First Lady but whoever hears of the second family or the second lady? We don't like second best. No one wants to be on the second string. No one wants to be the second banana. We don't want to play second fiddle to any one. Most of us prefer first class travel whether by plane, train or bus. We don't like the term second class passengers. We don't even like the term "second class mail. We call it "junk mail." We hate second mortgages, but if some people didn't have a second mortgage the first mortgage would have been foreclosed long ago.

Sometimes you can afford to come in second, sometimes you cannot. I know second is not first. But I do know that second may be better than first -- sometimes. In theology we talk about First Cause (God has the original and uncaused cause of the universe) not second cause. I thank God for a second chance when I have messed up the first. In fact, so many people have had such unhappy childhoods they should be looking forward to the second childhood. Maybe they can improve it. My dad taught me to get my second wind physically. When I am tired, exhausted, weary, and don't feel like going on I thank God for the second wind spiritually. Before you start second guessing me about second, let me remind you of the importance of second in the Bible. The Bible tells us that the first man (Adam) is of the earth, the second man (Jesus) is the Lord from heaven (I Cor. 15:47). It is through the second man (Jesus) that we can experience the second birth (John 3:4). Our first birth is physical. Our second birth is spiritual. It is through the second man (Jesus) that we can experience the second birth that delivers us from the second death (eternal separation from God) (Rev. 2:11; 20:6; 14). Because of the second man (Jesus) and because of my second birth in Christ, I will be caught up at the second coming and escape the second death (Heb. 9:28; I Thess. 4:13-18). Hallelujah for all those seconds! But wait, I need to tell you that to experience all the above seconds, you can't do it by a second hand faith. Your faith must be experienced first hand!!



## RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By **Don Jacobsen**

Alden was big for a 5-year old, bright, and often pretty bossy with the other kids in Mrs. Newton's kindergarten. During lunch hour recess one day he snatched Sarah's doll from her hand and sent it sailing over the fence like a 4-legged Frisbee.

Mrs. Newton saw it happen and offered a few words of comfort to Sarah, then took Alden by the hand and walked out through the gate to the field where the doll had landed. She did not say a word to Alden. Not a word. As they approached the doll, Alden let go of her hand and ran ahead to pick it up. He and Mrs. Newton walked back to the playground together, where Alden returned the doll to Sarah with a brief, "I'm sorry." Mrs. Newton did not say a word.

Mrs. Newton told Alden to a bench over near the school building -- it was designated as a "thinking place." She told him they would sit there together for a while. As they sat, Mrs. Newton did not say a word.

After a few minutes Alden, looking down, said to Mrs. Newton, "I think I've had

my think," and explained that what he had done with Sarah's doll was "not nice," and that he would not do it again. Mrs. Newton agreed with him that what he had done had made Sarah sad and she knew he did not want to do that anymore. There were tears in Alden's eyes when they finished their visit just as the playground bell rang ending lunch hour recess.

When I read that story I thought, "Come on, that's not real world. It's not that easy. Little boys do not come to repentance that readily." But five-year olds understand about hurting others, about being hurt, about justice. Maybe what slows down the learning is our incessant lectures. Remember how far into the story we were before Mrs. Newton decided words would be useful. The most powerful learning occurred, not from a lecture by his teacher, but from her helping him to think about what he had done and how his actions had affected others. Wise teacher; I like her style.

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net. N(Mar14,NI)SH



# 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 7:14 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](http://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, [mtnregartsandcraftsguild@hotmail.com](mailto:mtnregartsandcraftsguild@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](http://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](http://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.  
**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" HIWASSEE (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](mailto:tcherald@windstream.net)

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

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 Fridays at 5 PM

SUBSCRIPTION RATES  
 TOWNS COUNTY (1 YEAR) \$15  
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**GUEST COLUMNS**  
 From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial. Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea. Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper. If so, please write. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE EMAILED OR MAILED TO:** Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Our email address: [tcherald@windstream.net](mailto:tcherald@windstream.net). Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should address issues of general interest, such as politics, the community, environment, school issues, etc. Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.\*  
*Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.*