

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor

The Transportation 1% tax known as Tsplost will be determined by an election rigged and pre-determined by the General Assembly and the Governor.

Having a vote decided by Regions within the State is a calculated maneuver by the State to ensure passage of this tax and the reasons are listed below. The State knew the likelihood of failure with a county by county vote so the law was written to decide by a region-wide vote, a first for the State of Georgia and a rigged election if there ever was one. And the ARC Region will get some of the money from the rest of the State and Regions and you can be assured of that.

1.-The 12 Regions are unbalanced by population from one region to another. 2.-With the exception of the Atlanta region, all other regions are made up by counties that surround one or two major cities and county. Region 7 has 2 out of 14 counties with over 70% of the population in the region. 3.-A yes vote is those 2 counties will force the other 12 counties to pay the tax even though the other 12 counties may vote no. 4.-Most of the 75% of taxes collected in the region will be used by the largest counties in that region. The smaller and poorer counties will be paying for transportation needs of the larger and richer counties. A new way of taking from the poor and giving to the rich, courtesy of the State of Georgia.

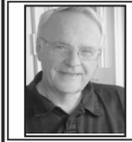
Is your county for sale at any price? Vote for County Home rule. Vote No on Tsplost.

Regards,
Mike Sims

To the Editor:

When life gives you lemons, sell them because they're 85 cents a piece plus tax! First of all, this is just my opinion. We are in a great recession or depression depending upon your viewpoint. Just look around at the vehicles for sale and the empty store fronts with gas prices soaring on a daily basis when are we going to top out? Your guess is as good as mine. Now to my point on the penny tax including food. Please step back and look at the big picture. Like I said I just paid 85 cents for one very mediocre lemon. Go to your local market and just take note of the produce that is produced in foreign countries with little or no safety inspections and regulations. I once worked with a renowned chef who used to yell, "Pennies, pennies, pennies chasing dollars!" It all adds up to your bottom line. I agree 100% with Commissioner Kendall. Vote no on this tax. Remember - pennies, pennies!

Thank you,
Chef Ben Sutton
C.I.A. 1977
Fellowship Escottier Room 1978



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Just before Spring Break, Miami 7th-grader, Michael Bell, Jr., brought home a report card with three F's. Dad and mom were furious and took drastic action. Michael Bell, Sr., the dad, put together a 3X4 foot sandwich board sign and made his son wear it on a busy intersection every day of Spring Break. The sign said, "I'm in the 7th grade and I got 3 F's. Blow your horn if there's something wrong with that."

As you might predict, dad got mixed reviews on his disciplinary strategy. Some said, "Way to go, dad. Be tough." Others said, "That's no way to punish a teenager."

What say you? Here's my take: I am in agreement with dad and mom's desire that their son get a good education. While grad school or even college may not be essential to survival in today's world, the basics of middle school are. If you can't spell, can't carry on an intelligent conversation, can't think through problems, and can't do the math to keep your checking account balanced, it's going to take you longer to get where you want to go - no matter where that is - if you get there at all.

However, it's not smart parenting to try and embarrass your kids into good behavior. But didn't the boy tell a reporter, "When I get back to school I'm gonna do better." Yes, but that's irrelevant to the issue

here. DDT spray kills bugs like it was intended to, but we don't use it because it does too much additional damage. Like swatting a fly with a hammer.

Here's an option: Cancel the boy's spa membership. What? See, most kids' rooms today are equipped more like fancy spas than bedrooms. When Michael comes home from school tomorrow, his room has been stripped. Gone are his TV, his computer, Game Boy, barbells, the dresser, even the pictures on the wall. All that's left are his bed and some basic clothes. He also forfeits his cell phone.

Then mom and dad rush off to talk to the teacher, right? Wrong. This is an issue for the boy to solve, not his teachers. His parents shouldn't be helping with his homework, either. No one in the world can solve the problem except the 7th grader, and this monkey should be on his back alone.

At the end of the next grading period, if he has no grade lower than a C, he gets his dresser, his clothes, and his pictures back. Unless of course he complains about the process - each time he whines it adds a week to the penalty. After the next grading period, all C grades or above, he gets the rest of his stuff back. Effective discomfort, but not humiliation. It works.

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKidsWellDone.net.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Anger can be as deadly as a bullet to the head or it can be a slow poison that manifests in stress related disease. Anger is ubiquitous on this planet and it has plagued us from the time of the first humans to last night's network shooting report from Atlanta. Even the Divine is not immune to anger; our religious writings are full of wrath and vengeance. There is no escape from anger.

My greatest lesson in anger was taught to me by a group of young people for whom anger was a constant companion. My first expedition as a wilderness guide and counselor was with a group of 11 teenagers who had been released from detention centers in the hopes of completing our program as a pathway back home. From the beginning of the course, when we were not preventing physical violence from their pent up hostility, we were dealing with verbal violence released through sarcasm and profanity.

As a rookie guide I was armed with a variety of "arm-chair" advice from book authors who had never tried to help a group of unruly teenage boys pitch their tents in the rain while being drained of blood by mosquitos and biting flies. I was convinced that I should never allow my frustration or my own anger to be seen, and keeping those emotions in check was difficult. The physical effort involved in a river expedition was enough to assuage a great deal of everyone's anger, but the quiet times were volatile. My fellow instructors, veterans of outdoor experiential education, counseled me to take a firmer line. "You can't be their friend," they told me. "They will walk all over you and it will be that much harder to keep them safe." They were right, but it took a series of extraordinary events to teach me a valuable lesson about anger.

We put eight canoes on the water just below Macon, Georgia in February of 1992. We were loaded with provisions for at least 7 days on the river before resupply. 11 angry teenage boys and three wilderness guides who had no idea that the heavy rainfalls of the previous weeks would soon raise the Okmulgee River to well above flood stage. The boys had just been through a week of training in canoeing and water safety and we were as well-prepared as possible, but the lazy, black water rivers of South Georgia are always

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.

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full of surprises, especially when heavy rain sends them out of their banks.

We put in on a chilly, overcast day when the water temperature was cold enough to make hypothermia a very real danger for anyone exposed for too long. The boys were excited to be on the river and a little frightened. Most of our clients were from the inner city and anything beyond asphalt and electronics was foreign to them. I was in the lead boat with one of the stronger paddlers from the group of kids. My co-instructors were paddling together bringing up the rear. About 10 miles downriver and 20 miles above Hawkinsville, Georgia, we had a boat capsize.

Life jackets are essential to all river trips and all of us were properly equipped. However, when a tree falls into the river or when the river rises to the level of tree branches, a new danger is created that is referred to as a "strainer." When a canoe hits a strainer, it can turn sideways and fill with water, quickly flipping passengers and gear over and under. The force of the running water can pin and entangle a boater with a real danger of drowning, even with a life jacket. The cold water of February was an immediate threat to the two boys clinging to the branches of a downed tree.

As my co-workers positioned themselves to rescue the capsized passengers it was left to me to manage the other nine kids now drifting aimlessly downstream. They were not listening to me, and we in jeopardy of having another capsize. It was essential that I collect all the remaining canoes in an eddy to "gunwale-up," or to bring the boats side by side, each passenger hooking one leg into the adjoining boat to form a makeshift raft. At a loss as to what to do to get the kids to listen, the words of a veteran counselor came to me. He had said, "It is OK to let them see that you're angry. You will know when it's the right time." This was definitely the right time, and as my mild manner was replaced by the spirit of my old drill instructor, I let fly with all the bellowing anger that I could muster. It worked. The kids finally began to follow instructions and we were able to eddy out and wait for the rescue going on upstream.

All's well that ends well. Yet it bothered me somewhat that I had lost my temper. It was in debriefing the event a few days later with my Director of Operations that the lesson was made complete. My D.O. was a combat veteran of Vietnam who had been working with adjudicated youth for over 20 years. "You're always going to get angry, Don," he said. "There is no way around it. And the kids you are working with are always going to be angry. Anger is not the problem. It is as natural as grief or happiness or any other emotion. The key issue is how you express that anger and what you do with it. You used yours to keep some kids from drowning on the river. You will be angry with them again, but if you can show them your anger - and the proper way to handle it, some of them will learn."



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

My stand-offish friends

A few weeks ago I noticed two strange little creatures peering from underneath my workshop. At first I wasn't sure what kind of creatures they were because they darted their heads in and out so quickly. A furry blur was about all I could glimpse. Since my wife is not a real animal loving person our closest resemblance to pets are masses of birds that visit our residence each day. We enjoy watching birds year round and we try to provide seed, suet and water for a variety of hungry birds. Well, as days passed and these little furry creatures ventured outside I recognized them as two beautiful kittens. However, they were terribly frightened of me. My presence caused them to scurry back to their place of safety underneath my workshop. Because there is no presence of a mom my assumption is that she may have given birth to them under the shop and perhaps abandoned them or she could have been killed. However, they appeared to be hungry and needed to be fed. Well, to make a long story longer I have been feeding them and making every effort to domesticate them. At first I had to set their food down and walk a good distance away before they would come near the food. As the days have passed they have gotten closer to me but I have never been able to touch them. In spite of my daily provisions for them and speaking "cat language" to them they don't want to have anything to do with me. They are quite willing to eat and run without any acknowledgment of where

the food came from. As a matter of fact, when I open the door in the morning both of them come out of hiding with a "please feed me" looking face (at some distance away of course). They do this at noon and at night also. These greedy little rascals still will not allow me to pet them. My efforts at making friends with these pretty creatures have met with complete failure. Their attitude toward me makes me wonder what's wrong with you "guys", "gals", whatever, I only want to be friends. Now my biggest concern with them has to do with their nature. Their food is a variety of real "store bought" cat food but there is something about a cats' appetite that craves something different. It is in their nature. My hobby of feeding birds and their habit of feasting on birds has clashed. My bird feeders draw them like a magnet. On more than one occasion I have had to scold them out of the trees and away from my bird feeders. They are cats and it is impossible for me to change their nature.

How like these cats we are as God's creation. God wants to have fellowship with us and He provides the finest provisions for us, but we are stand-offish. His nature of righteousness and our nature of sin creates a spirit of fear within us. We are content and satisfied to gorge on His blessings daily without becoming friends with Him. But I am grateful that He has the power to change our nature and embrace us in His love.

Have you let God change your nature and your sinful appetite so that you enjoy fellowship with Him? If not, you can. You don't have to be afraid and stand at a distance. His death on the cross and His resurrection has bridged that gap!

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"After such a mild winter, I can't wait to see what this summer will be like!"

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