

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

I am turning off the television with resolve on this bright spring morning. The disconnect between celebrities chatting about other celebrities one moment and updates on the latest shooting in Atlanta the next is too great. The Internet is a silent scream of war and rumors of war, of disaster and impending doom – but wouldn't you like to ride out the apocalypse in a brand new SUV? Meanwhile, outside my window a puppy is chasing a butterfly against a backdrop of bright green leaves which magically appeared overnight. Flower buds are opening. The bee hives out by the barn are buzzing with busy workers bringing in loads of pollen to feed their young.

It is a gorgeous spring day, and even though the beauty conceals a world of life and death drama (the puppy caught the butterfly) just beneath the surface which is in every way as intense as our human struggles, the vibrancy and the honesty of the natural world renders the food for thought proffered by our networks of virtual reality into an indigestible mass.

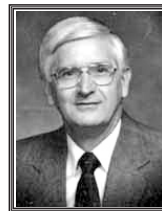
To be "connected" in our culture means to be immersed in continuous drama and hype. Is it any wonder that stress related diseases are on the rise in our country, appearing now even among school children? What a gold mine we have become for pharmaceutical companies which offer cures for all the ills of humanity as well as for the side effects of the cures. Where else can we joyfully buy a pill for depression which may cause cancer, constipation and erectile dysfunction - because we have pills for all those conditions too?

I am concerned for our young and malleable minds, not because of declining test scores based on arbitrary standards designed to measure competitiveness, but because I do not know what tools they are being given for discernment and critical

thinking. My own generation did not do much better as we memorized facts and figures. We were taught what to think in order to pass the tests, but rare was the teacher who taught us how to think. We watched too much television, but we were not saturated in information and we were not constantly, during every waking moment, stimulated by input designed to excite and emote for profit and political gain. Consider the decisions made by my generation, the wars we fought, the idiots we elected, the degradation of our Republic that we allowed – and we did it all with the help of television, radio and print alone. What will the next generation choose after being raised in the chaos of the Information Age?

The cool breeze from the mountain is imbued with life force this morning. The smell of freshly plowed soil draws me away from this box of sand and wires and away from the vanity and vexation of spirit that we call civilization.

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

Use gumption before jumping

A fellow was visiting the zoo one day and he happened to notice one of the attendants crying quietly over in a corner. Concerned about the crying man he asked another attendant why he was weeping. He was told the man was crying because one of the elephants had died. The visitor said, "He must have been really fond of the elephant." "No, that's not it at all," the attendant said, "He's crying because he has to dig the grave for it." We certainly need to use gumption (country definition for common sense) before we start jumping. Don't live life just by opinions – yours or others. Check things out and prove them. Out of the past come some hilarious stories. Although I am not sure about their credibility, they make good stories. For instance, Adam Thompson of Cincinnati, OH filled the first bathtub in the U.S. in 1842. Doctors jumped to some rash conclusions by predicting rheumatism and inflammation of the lungs. A ban on bathtub bathing was published by Philadelphia for several months. Providence and Hartford set up heavy water rates. I occasionally run into folks that I believe are still scared of bathing. When Jenner discovered vaccination, he was jeered and "intelligent" men said animal diseases would invade the human race. Some said that people who had been vaccinated had horns to actually grow out of their heads. When Galileo discovered that the earth moved around the sun

he was laughed to scorn. Authorities threatened him with the stake if he didn't change his opinion. When Columbus set sail to prove the earth was round most people of his day predicted he would sail off the end of the earth. When the surgeon, Harvey, discovered the circulation of the blood from the heart to the extremities he was ridiculed and disbelieved on every hand. Those folks should be around today to witness angioplasty, stints and bypass surgery. Back in the early days of the patent office someone suggested that it be closed down because everything that could be invented had already been invented. James Russell Lowell said, "The foolish and the dead never change their opinions." Be careful about jumping the track by jumping to conclusions. God did not make us to be jumping jacks. He gave to us a mind, intellect, and reasoning ability. We need to use our minds and not jump every time someone pulls a string. Before I reach my jumping-off place for this article let me remind you that multitudes have jumped to erroneous conclusions about Jesus Christ. Contrary to what many believe, He is not sitting somewhere in the heavens watching and waiting for you to commit some sin in order to send you to hell. Rather, He has come down to this earth as a baby; God's Son, to grow up for three decades and die on a cross for the sin of the world, in order that he might save us and deliver us from our sin and this present evil world. During this Easter Season why don't you read your Bible (Basic Instruction Before Leaving Earth) and discover first hand who Jesus is. When you experience the truth of God's Son you won't be jumping to conclusions but you will be jumping for joy.



Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,
Recently, my father and I had the pleasure of attending the Don Williams concert at the Anderson Music Hall. Mr. Williams put on an excellent show, but for us the true stars of the evening were two Music Hall employees who came to our aid after the show when I realized that I had locked the keys in my car.

Hilda, the general manager of the facility, and Harry, the head of security, stayed with us through all the rain and cold. Hilda even drove to our town home so that I could follow her, since I am unfamiliar with the area. The kindnesses they showed us during that long evening are too numerous to mention here. And they did it with such grace and good humor that what could have been a very dismal experience was instead a tremendous testament to the character and neighborliness of your charming town.

We're sure that the people of Hiawassee already know what wonderful people they are, but my dad and I just want to publicly thank Hilda and Harry for being such Good Samaritans when we were stranded.

Bobby Minish, Clarksville, GA.
Sherry Treffinger, Greenville, SC



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Last week I was talking with a pediatrician friend of mine and he told me how many of the parents who come to his office are totally exhausted emotionally trying to raise their kids. He said, "Many of them know they ought to be doing a better job, but they just don't have the energy to go through the hassle of doing what they know they ought to do."

I started to reply, "The thing they don't realize is that it takes less energy to do it right than it takes to..."

He took a deep breath and opened his mouth to disagree with what he assumed I was going to say. But I surprised him.

I finished my sentence, "...It takes less energy to do it right than it takes to clean up the mess from doing it wrong!"

He thought for a few seconds, then replied, "That's a very profound statement about parenting."

It's true. Doing battle with your kids is hard work. Arguing with your kids uses up nervous energy. Repeating instructions time after time is

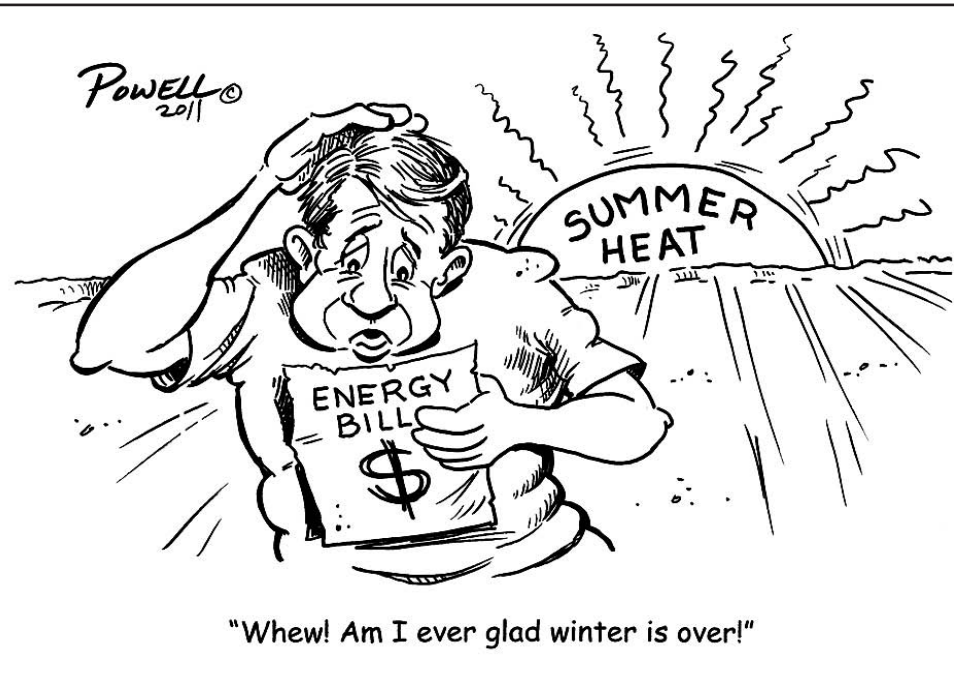
tiring. Feeling that you must weigh every word so you don't fracture their fragile self-esteem is akin to a high-wire balancing act.

So give your instructions and walk away. No argument; no negotiation. This is not roommates deciding who does the vacuuming this week; this is parent assigning chore to child. And if child doesn't follow through as directed? There is a phenomenon in life called consequences and this is a great opportunity for them to learn about it.

For instance? OK, your 3rd grader willfully ignores an instruction – so he goes to bed right after supper. Your teen misses a curfew – so she loses a privilege.

In the grand design of the universe it has been determined that kids should have parents and that those parents are the authorities, the leaders in their families. Leaders are to be obeyed, not challenged. And what if the disobedience is serious? Let's talk about that next time.

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



"Whew! Am I ever glad winter is over!"

Community Calendar

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. 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.

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 3rd 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 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 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, mtnregartsandcraftsguild.org. mtnregartsandcraftsguild@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.
Full 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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