

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Thank you
On behalf of Chatuge Regional Nursing Home, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every person who donated flowers for the Memory Garden. I could not have imagined or been more pleased with the gracious generosity of the friends, family members and the community. The garden is beautiful and could not have been possible if it were not for each and every one of you. Thank you so much for helping us to create such a beautiful garden for our residents and their family members to enjoy for years to come.

Tabitha Crawford, Activities Director

To the Editor:
If you liked the new and improved version of your electric bill from BRMEMC for the month of July, you will love what's coming down the road.

The BRMEMC is a corporation which operates under the following conditions: It has a monopoly without any threat of competition, produces nothing, has no investors, so without pressure to show profit, has no mandated need for approval from any authority for the fees it charges for its services and it pays no federal or state income taxes.


Its only responsibility is to provide a means by which electricity can be supplied to residences and business entities in its assigned territory.

My personal interest was raised when upon receipt of my July bill, in addition to the rate increase, the item shown as "Customer Charge" increased a whopping 69% over the previous month. A little investigation on my part revealed the following reasons. The cooperative is smothered in long-term debt in excess of \$80 million caused by the massive expansion of capacity to handle need caused by demand which never materialized, and to which they are now adding 20 MILLION DOLLARS for a new headquarters. That is the construction that is so visible in Young Harris because of its size and scope. What are they thinking? At a time when their business is declining, without any prospect of improvement in the near future, they are spending \$20,000,000 to improve their headquarters environment.

The next logical question is how do they pay for this folly? The answer is obvious. The members of this cooperative are the victims and their pocketbooks will fund this absolutely unjustified expense. I, for one, am calling on the Board of Directors of BRMEMC (who must approve all aspects of the co-op operation) to shut down this headquarters project immediately and carefully review all expenditures in line with the mission of the cooperative: "To serve the members of this cooperative by providing appropriate electric service to same at the least cost possible".

J. C. Connor

Extension Tips
by **Robert Brewer**



nitrogen fertilizer, rapid plant growth and drastic moisture fluctuation caused by drought, heavy rain, or improper watering. Control blossom end rot by using quick reacting lime and maintaining good moisture.

4. Tomato Hornworm: Plants may look bare and upon closer inspection you may see frass or caterpillar droppings and missing stems and leaves. An even closer look may reveal a large green worm or caterpillar which is the larvae of a Hummingbird moth. Often these are parasitized by wasps. If the hornworm has white protrusions on its back, you may pick it off the tomato plants, and allow it to remain in the garden so the wasps may hatch and parasitize other hornworms. Bacillus thuringiensis -Bt is also an effective control for large hornworm populations.

5. Whiteflies: Greenhouse whitefly is another common tomato pest. The flying adult stage is familiar to most gardeners, but the pale, motionless nymphs that feed on leaf undersides are not. Nymphs and adults remove sap and reduce plant vigor. Insecticidal soaps sprayed on the underside of the leaves may help control populations. A good way of preventing whiteflies on your tomatoes is to inspect transplants and only buy ones that are free of whiteflies.

6. Early blight is caused by the fungus Alternaria solani. Symptoms become prevalent during the hotter months. This disease produces brown to black, target-like spots on older leaves. If severe, the fungus also attacks stems and fruit. Affected leaves may turn yellow, and then drop, leaving the fruit exposed to sunburn. Sanitation is the best control. Remove all diseased plant tissue on the ground, and the fungus overwinters on leaf debris. Do not plant tomatoes in the same place next year. Space plants farther apart to improve air circulation. Avoid overhead irrigation.

Tomato Spotted Wilt is caused by a virus that usually is spread by thrips. The foliage is severely spotted with light green mottling and small grayish-brown, thin dead spots. Shoot tips may die. The spotted wilt virus can overwinter in weeds and ornamental plants.

3. Blossom-End-Rot: This symptom is caused by insufficient calcium when the fruit is forming, and is characterized by a large dry, brown to black and often depressed, leathery area at the blossom end or bottom of the tomato. Low calcium usually results from putting too much

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Some unknowns in life are easy to discover. All you have to do is pay attention and remember what you see. This is called "experiential education," and it is widely considered the best way to learn. Thanks to experiential education, I never buy any processed food with the word "delight" on the label. I tend to avoid eateries named after any of a chicken and businesses which have the words "and more" attached to their names.

Some of life's questions are arguably a complete waste of time and resources. Consider the recent media spectacle around the big question of whether a famous ball bouncer would play his game in this city or that. I saw the governor of Ohio singing an embarrassing song of praise to this minor deity in a creepy video one morning before I had taken my first sip of coffee...and although I believe I should be able to eventually leave the disgusting memory behind without therapy, this spectacle which might otherwise be funny still leaves me saddened for what it says about our society and our pitiful and fawning worship of celebrity.

Some questions are extremely difficult to answer. Is capital punishment just or even effective? When is war justified? Is abortion "right" or "wrong"? I want to touch on a moment on the last question, and not because I think I can answer it. As a male, I'm not one hundred percent sure I even have a right to address it. It is a question of faith that we attempt to address in terms of science, even though we lack the science to completely answer it. Does human life begin at conception? How exactly do we define "human"? Does the soul enter the body at conception or when the body takes its first breath? What is a soul?

As a society we may never agree on these questions simply because, like all questions of faith, they exist beyond the reach of our science, beyond the reach of logic itself. This does not mean that we do not have the right to choose what we believe and to create customs and laws which reflect those beliefs. The problem is, what do we do when we need to make choices about issues upon which we strongly disagree? We have a system designed to do just that; a system where popular opinion begets legislation which is then filtered through the courts to become law. On the question of abortion our system has barely been able to handle such a polarizing issue, but it has been able to produce laws, though highly unpopular with many.

Which brings us to the point of this week's discussion. This is an election year and the polarizing issue of abortion will once again be used as a litmus test by candidates who know that they can guarantee themselves a number of votes simply by stating a position on the issue. In Georgia's governor's race this year the "pro-

life" or "pro-choice" position is at the top of the list of many candidates' alleged qualifications for the job. At the risk of deeply offending some on either side of the issue, I must in all sincerity suggest to you that, in the context of impending economic disaster, with soldiers continuing to die in two wars often forgotten by the starry eyed public, and in the face of continuing environmental catastrophe - the issue of abortion is a red herring.


For many voters a candidate's position on this single issue is enough to guarantee a vote without any further investigation of the candidate's ideas or her past performance. Nevertheless I must continue to assert that voting for a pro-choice or pro-life governor, or president, will not change the law of the land. Millions of Americans voted for George Bush simply because he claimed to be a Christian and a pro-life candidate. After eight years of the Bush Administration, however, abortion was still legal and you would be hard pressed to demonstrate conclusively a single instance where the former president's avowed religious beliefs affected the events which occurred during those years.

The business of politics divides to conquer. Yet after years of undermining and through the continuing assault on our Republic, the mechanism for change is still within our grasp. I challenge you, I beg you...in the upcoming election please set aside the "litmus" positions and examine logically and dispassionately what the candidates are presenting. Set aside the façade of political party and try to assess who you think would be the best manager as opposed to the best figurehead, the best icon, or the best celebrity. Managers are what we need and the need is becoming desperate.

Every president in my lifetime and every governor has claimed to be a "Christian." Let's assume then that all the candidates are, and set aside this consideration. Most candidates choose to run as a democrat or a republican. Barack Obama ran as a democrat, yet if you put politics aside, some of his decisions would make any republican happy. Obama is a corporatist, as are many candidates wearing the democrat or the republican label. Set these labels aside. They mean very little when it comes to how a candidate will perform in office.

As for the issue of abortion, this is a question that will not be decided in a governor's race or even a presidential election. This is a "bottom up," not a "top down" issue. Laws on this issue change when society changes. Society becomes more educated, more mature and wiser - and it becomes less so. Laws will follow.


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



Too many irons in the fire?
Most folks walking through our house for the first time usually have a lot of questions, like: What is that? Where did you get it? What is its purpose? Why would you want to keep it? The answers to those four questions are simple - I tell them what it is; where I got it; what it does; and I keep it because I am odd. I just like old relics from the past. Among those relics are some irons. We have flat irons that have been passed down through the family and some that have been given to us. Before electricity became available our ancestors used these irons to press wrinkles from their clothing. Usually, they had several irons because they stayed hot only for a short period of time. They either heated these irons in the hot coals of the fireplace or placed them on wood-burning or coal-burning stoves. With several of these in the embers or placed on a stove, when the one being used became cold, they would replace it with one that was hot. This took no small amount of skill keeping them at the right temperature. When a person tried to keep too many irons heated, they simply had too many irons in the fire, thus the saying, "Too many irons in the fire." It is said of our generation, because we are so busy and involved in so many activities, that we have "too many irons in the fire." Even though that statement has been around a long time, I am not sure that it is true. My personal opinion is that we have only one iron. We just have too many fires going

and that is the reason we get burned in life. We have only one life to live, not several. Among our collection of irons we have a different kind of iron that our ancestors used years ago. It is made of iron, but not solid. It is hollow on the inside. The top has a hinged lid that gives access to the inside. Our ancestors didn't put this iron in the fire; they put the fire (hot coals) in the iron. I hear people say "they are going through the fire" or "they are in the fire." I think I understand what they are trying to say, but maybe they need to get some things "ironed out." Perhaps they need to get out of the fire and get the fire on the inside. Some people spend their lives putting out fires. They operate from the outside. We live in an iron-fisted, iron-handed, iron-hearted and iron-willed world to the extent that we become iron-headed - we react and respond only to the outside. Paul characterized the latter days as some "having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Timothy 4:2). Their conscience has been withered, dried, scorched, burned with the hot iron of evil thinking to the extent that they no longer can make moral decisions. My assessment of some of the so-called "modern-thinkers" and "open-minded individuals" is that they are not modern, nor thinkers, neither open-minded, they just have a seared conscience. Whether we recognize it or not, many of our world leaders are persons with seared consciences. They are incapable of making moral decisions. But then we shouldn't be surprised as these are the last days. The conditions are favorable; the fields are ripe for harvest. Therefore, let every Christian get fired up and strike while the iron is hot. Share the good news of the gospel.

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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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