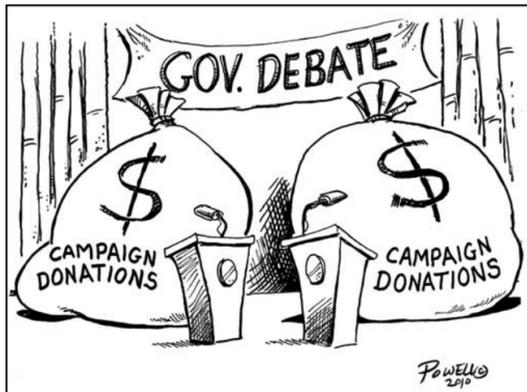


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



Letters to The Editor

To the Editor:

I would like to comment on how great of a job everyone at Towns County Elementary School is doing. I attended Open House last night with my son and daughter; and everything was very well organized, the teachers and staff were very friendly, and my children seemed genuinely happy about going back to school today. With the wonderful signs as you enter the front door along with the lists of students outside each door, I was able to easily locate where my children would be going to class. Both of my children's teachers were very friendly and helpful; they had a folder of all of the needed information on each child's desk and greeted and talked to each child individually as they walked in the room. Both of my children were very excited to meet their new teachers. Of course, we had to stop by all of their old classrooms so that they could tell all of their past teachers hello. They were happy to get up this morning and get on the bus and start a new school year. Thank you to all of the wonderful teachers and staff. Keep up the great work you do!

Sincerely,
Christine Holloway

Letter to the Editor:

Boys in Towns County will have their first chance this year to have an exciting year of adventure and fun by joining the Cub Scouts this fall. Cub Scout Pack 407 will host Cub Scout Roundup on Thursday, August 19 at 7 PM. The registration meeting will take place at the Towns County Elementary School lunchroom.

Cub Scouting is a volunteer-led program for boys in grades 1-5 (or who are ages 6-10). Fun activities that promote family values and teach citizenship, personal fitness, and character development take place throughout the year for the boys and their families. Activities take place both outdoors and indoors providing boys with plenty of adventure and fun!

Nationally more than 1 million boys are members of the Cub Scouts. For more information, contact Foy Todd at the Northeast Georgia Council, Boy Scouts of America toll free at 800-699-8806 ext. 111 or fotodd@bsmail.org.

Foy Todd, Field Director
Northeast Georgia Council, Boy Scouts of America



ASK DR. DON

By Don Jacobsen

OK, so Josh is 5 and he's catching on that he is a valued member of the family, that he is loved, that he has responsibilities (aka chores). He is not a free-loader after all. Today he is playing in the living room with his Matchbox toys.

Mom enters and says, "Josh, Mrs. Edelweiss is coming over this afternoon and I want to talk to her here in the living room. Pick up your toys now; I'll be back in a few minutes to see that it's done." And she walks out of the room. She respects Josh too much to think she has to say it twice. Or that she has to beg, plead, bargain, threaten, or shout. She doesn't hover to see that he begins, she just walks away.

Five minutes later she returns and Josh has not begun to pick up his toys. Now what? Well, she can beg, plead, scold, threaten, or shout. But that's not what good leaders do. She picks up the toys herself - and just in time to welcome Mrs. Edelweiss. She sends Josh in the other room to play.

That was Monday. On Wednesday, Mrs. Clark next door invites Josh to go to the park with her and her 5-year old daughter. Josh comes in to

get permission. "Sorry, Josh, you'll have to tell Mrs. Clark that you can't go." "I can't go? Why?"

"Well, do you remember on Monday (by the way, by the age of five, punishment can be separated from the disobedience by as much as several days as long as Mom makes it clear what the infraction was) when I told you to put away your toys? You chose not to do that when I asked, so as a reminder for next time you can't go to the park today. Furthermore, your bedtime will be 7 rather than 8 every night for a week." No shouting, no tirades, no scolding. "And if I hear you fuss about it, Josh, it will add another week to the early bedtime."

Remember Josh's two needs from Mom: Love and Leadership. The love is shown in helping him develop the habits and attitudes he'll need to have toward those who will be in authority over him all his life, and leadership by teaching him responsibility and obedience.

Good call, Mom.

Submit your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The term "environmentalist" has so often been used in a derogatory manner that in popular culture today it still can carry with it images of hippies chained to trees or simpletons waving signs. Industries which extract their profits from the earth have sometimes defended their terraforming and polluting activities by focusing on a narrow fringe of protestors rather than the message of the protest - an old and effective common fallacy. They attack the messenger while ignoring the message, but at the same time market themselves as stewards of the environment. Consider BP's "beyond petroleum" marketing campaign of recent years and the clean and green image it attempted to acquire.

At the other end of the spectrum from greed incorporated there does exist a fringe element quick to condemn anything that business attempts to do. A narrow mountain road cannot be widened for improved safety without someone protesting or, as in the case of our neighbors in Union county, a utility can't move a power line out of a state park and onto a road right of way without accusations. As a former wilderness guide I worked with several on the fringe who considered anything industrial to be evil. They would rant and rave for hours against the "establishment," but they somehow overlooked the level of industrial and technological sophistication necessary to produce the \$500 Dana backpack or the Gortex rain gear or the L. L. Bean hiking boots they wore. One in particular drove a BMW to work, by no means a low tech means of transportation.

Some numbers indicate that a slight majority of those who champion Green causes do tend to be affluent or the children of affluent parents. It is hard to afford organic produce on food stamps and difficult to install solar panels on your rented roof when you work for an hourly wage. It does not bode well for our civilization that a clean and healthy environment should be a luxury rather than a basic human right.

Somewhere between the village and the suburb we lost our grip on the idea that clean air, clean water and peaceful green spaces should be central to our lifestyles. We lost the concept of the commons, the green space or the village green, and in that journey we became more driven and less inspired. The primary goal of our civilization became the ability to drive from one place to another as fast as possible. Destination oriented, the miles of wasteland between our goals became less important. As Charles Monibot pointed out

recently, many of our behavioral problems are directly influenced by the places we live.

Cohen and Lezak published a study in 1977 which showed that a noisy environment leads to inattentiveness to social cues. People are more likely to interact with their neighbors in quiet neighborhoods. The Journal of the American Planning Association published a study in 1969, continued by Joshua Hart in 2008, which showed that communities become weaker as traffic on their streets increases. Multiple studies show that trees and vegetation in common spaces influence people to form social ties and that the absence of green spaces leads to social isolation. Kuo and Sullivan published a study in 2001 which showed that when all other factors were equal, the presence of vegetation in inner city areas was linked to a reduction in the crime rate.

To their credit, the towns of Hiawassee and Hayesville do keep the memory of the village green alive in their "town squares." Hiawassee in particular makes excellent use of its central green space with a number of free concerts and events which invite people to come together as a community. This is an oasis, however in a desert of mile after mile of asphalt, of strip malls and convenience stores pumping gas, of outlet malls and trinket stores, fast food joints and Walmart stretched out along the narrow bands of American life accessible only by automobile.

We are a product of our environment, there is no doubt, and when we damage our environment we damage our bodies, our minds and our spirits. We should all be "environmentalists" if we hope to survive as a species. At the same time we almost totally dependent now on technology and industry to be able to survive as we do, isolated from each other and miles away from our sources of food and energy. We cannot all abandon our automobile, quit our job and dig up the back yard for a vegetable garden and hope to survive.

Many of us pine for simpler days, but we have journeyed many years from the communities and the self sufficiency of our grandparents. We can't get there from here. What we can do, however, is to choose a better path: to take the best of science and technology and create new communities. It was not science and it was not industry that poisoned our planet and dispersed our communities. It was greed magnified by science and industry. What might we accomplish if instead we choose to magnify our desires for a healthier more peaceful existence?



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

A Perverted View of Life

Our nation is in a number of urgent crises: We are engaged in wars, our economy is in shambles, unemployment keeps rising, immigration is a mega problem, political leaders are being investigated or under indictment; states are being sued by the federal government or states are suing the federal government, judges and courts are striking down moral, religious and traditional values that have been the bedrock for our society; racial problems seem to be on the increase and divisions seem to be more prevalent in all areas of our society than I personally can ever remember. The sad fact is that a lot of folks have not the foggiest notion of what to believe. Suspicion and distrust are the trademarks of the American public and why not? Deceit and lies finally erode the fabric of faith and trust. In this old gray-headed preacher's opinion, we have failed to produce strong leaders who will stand on truth no matter the consequences. Jesus said, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Pilate asked "What is truth" (John 18:38)? Jesus said, "...I am the truth..." (John 14:6) Truth is the foundation for freedom. The opposite of freedom is bondage. If the above statements are true, and I believe them to be so, then millions of individuals are locked up in bondage and think they have freedom. The Bible declares that truth brings freedom, and that God chose to reveal truth in the person of Christ. Henry

David Thoreau said, "Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth." In these days when there are rivers of information that flood our homes through television, radio, the internet, news magazines and daily newspapers, we are sometimes prone to ask, "What really is truth?" If you receive only information from human sources you have only a partial perception of what is going on in our world. Furthermore, a partial perception leads to a perverted view of life. In my personal opinion, all of our world problems are a result of a perverted view of Life. There is an old tale about blind men who went to "see" an elephant for the first time. The first blind man felt against the elephant's side and exclaimed, "This elephant is like a wall!" The second blind man felt of the elephant's tusk and declared, "This elephant is like a spear." The third blind man approached the elephant and taking hold of its trunk decided the elephant was like a snake. The fourth blind man reached around the elephant's leg and concluded that the elephant was like a tree. The fifth blind man touched the elephant's ear and said that the elephant was like a fan. The sixth blind man seized the elephant's tail and said it was like a rope. There you have it; a partial perception.

If you scan the pages of history you will see that the strongest opinions of men have crumbled to dust when exposed to the truth. Not only have the opinions of men fallen but the dominions of men are only faint tracks in the sands of time. In spite of the fact that men change the truth of God into a lie (Romans 1:25), His truth is marching on!

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Contact us at 706-896-4454

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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. 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.



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Sen. Saxby Chambliss, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-3521
U.S. Congressman Paul Brown, 10th District, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-4101
Rep. Stephen Allison, Georgia House of Representatives, 404-656-0177 or 0185
Sen. Jim Butterworth, Georgia State Senate, 404-463-1367
Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall, 706-896-2276
Clerk of Superior Court Cecil Dye, 706-896-2130
Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers, 706-896-2267
Magistrate/Probate Judge David Rogers, 706-896-3467
Sheriff Chris Clinton, 706-896-4444
Coroner Ricky Mathis, 706-896-6254
Enotah Circuit District Attorney Stan Gunter, 706-896-6489
Board of Education: 706-896-2279, Michael Anderson, Donna Hedden, Bob Gibby, Larry Kimsey, Emily Phillips. Superintendent: Dr. Richard Behrens
Hiawassee Mayor Barbara Mathis, 706-896-2202
Hiawassee City Council: Janet Allen, Jay Chastain, Joan Crothers, Howard Cunningham, Annie Johnson
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Towns County Herald

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