

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter To The Editor:

Lately, my electric bill has been higher than last year and I've also noticed that the new site for the Eastern electrical grid was on waterfront property and brought some concern. This was certainly not the highest and best use for the land, not to mention that it (the grid) is an eyesore to those that must travel by it. It, the electrical grid, does not "invite" potential buyers of adjacent properties to purchase, thus negating any future revenue into the county to the town of Hiawassee. I suggested to the Towns County Homeowner's Association that they ask Blue Ridge Mountain EMC to look at purchasing the vacant Mohawk Plant further East, however, I was told that they, Blue Ridge EMC, would have to "string" more poles along SR76. Currently, we have skeins of electrical wire.

This brings me to my next point. Our little town of Hiawassee's physiognomy is very similar to what one would see in an industrial section of a larger city. While telephone poles never add to the value of property, hence underground utilities in better neighborhoods, BRMEMC must have thought that there was some value to the erection of these unsightly, tall aluminum poles. When they were being installed, I thought "well, perhaps they will remove some of the existing poles". Wrong. BRMEMC added more lines, more poles, kept the existing poles and added more wooden poles to the Eastern section of Hiawassee. I would say that Hiawassee was looking like Detroit, except that Detroit, as with many other larger cities, have underground utilities. This last point, underground utilities, is very important. Why? Because big cities service many more people than Hiawassee and manage to do so underground. What would have been the cost to run much of the electrical lines underground? What would have been the cost of jack-hammers and operators compared to these poles? How much cheaper would it have been to set up their Eastern operation to the Mohawk Plant wherein they would have had land site, as well as offices to work from?

No, BRMEMC erected ugly, multi-lined spires, left the existing telephone poles and put an electrical grid on waterfront property. Could they have bought property off the main road where this ugly tangle of transformers and electrical mishmash would not have been seen. I say, "yes", especially in this market.

About my electric bill. Well, that has increased 25%. My customer service charge was \$8.69. It is now \$16.69. That is a 100% increase in customer service in one year, and we thought Obamacare would be a big increase! The meter reader does not even get out of their car, they just register the KWH with a machine as they drive by as has been the practice for ten years according to Blue Ridge Mountain EMC. Of course the State Tax runs relative to the charge, and I believe that the rates have been increased. I can only conclude that our unsightly electrical grid, our much "wanted" telephone poles and a waterfront property site have been "part" of the reason for the increase. My September 2009 bill was \$75.04, my September 2010 bill was \$95.42 with 30 KWH's increase in the one year. The costs are rising in North Georgia and residents don't even know what the Cap and Tax bill will cost us in additional billings. Hydroelectricity was supposed to be cheap, but the co-ops tastes are expensive to their customers.

I would be remiss if I did not mention their new facility being built in Young Harris. That has also added to the electric bill. I'm thinking that their current facility, also located in Young Harris is too small. However, had they purchased the Mohawk Property, they would have had an Eastern and Western location on either side of our county. Keeping their current location, adding the new location they will have a total of two locations and four grids. Can you imagine that? Just think, the housing recession started in 2006 and it appears that "For Sale" homes are on every street, yet, BRMEMC says these facilities and grids are necessary due to increased population.

That might be so, however, why did we, the customers, have to pay for properties that were unsuitable for electrical grids? A grid could have been located in the industrial section of Hiawassee or off the main road. Just think how inviting underground utility service would have been to future development and would have accomplished two things: (1) increased revenues into the tax base in Towns County. Hiawassee because our town would not be an eyesore and (2) left our community pristine with its quaint charm.

Many of the residents of Towns County are retired. We worked hard for our money and we are frightened in this economy. The last thing we need is to see "waste and abuse" in our little town. Our town and county administrators, as well as our private businesses, need to work together in this economy to insure that they allow our commercial/residential properties to maintain their value, not lose it to "elitist plans" for provision of electricity.

Carolyn R. Strong

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The level of dishonesty we have become conditioned to accept in political campaigns is disconcerting. Rumor, innuendo and outright deception are trumpeted across every form of media. The use of common fallacy is increasingly common. We hardly notice anymore, and if we do notice, it is always the candidate from the other party who is the culprit. The contradictory claims of the candidates are mutually exclusive. In other words, someone has to be lying. In some cases both candidates lie. We elect liars to office, expect them to represent us with integrity and become indignant when scandal is exposed.

I don't like Democrats and I don't like Republicans; don't like conservatives and don't like liberals. Author, Tom Robbins, said, "Conservatives understand Halloween; liberals only understand Christmas. If you want to control a population, don't give it social services, give it a scary adversary." With our two party, one agenda system we're forever trapped somewhere between Halloween and Christmas and Thanksgiving comes for fewer Americans every year.

Democratic candidates posture a concern for the downtrodden to hang on to their slim majority of voters. To pay for their ability to remain in power the fifty percent of us who actually pay income tax in this country are increasingly burdened by the costs of an ever growing government bent on being all things to all people. Democratic candidates appeal to people with open minded and egalitarian views, to non-judgmental people and to people with guilty consciences who want the government to force everyone else to assuage that guilt.

Republican candidates posture a concern for enemies that surround us at all times to hang on to their slim majority of voters. To pay for their ability to remain in power the fifty percent of us who actually pay income tax in this country are increasingly burdened by the costs of an ever growing government bent on projecting American corporate power into every corner of the world. Republican candidates appeal to hard working people with conservative values, to entrepreneurs and to people who are afraid of anyone who is different and want the government to force everyone to have the same values and religious beliefs.

How's that for a political (or anti-political) ad? Oversimplified, emotive and not entirely accurate? As far as technique it isn't too far afield from the marketing campaigns "approved by" today's candidates. I have to wonder if we would actually elect a candidate who dared to tell us the truth, because the truth does not a guaranteed happy ending like a half hour sit-com.

The truth is deceptively simple; easy to see but hard to reach. The continued prosperity of a nation is dependent upon

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.

just a few simple things: private investment, productivity and a sustainable population growth. Private investment is dead right now because entrepreneurs and small businesses which might otherwise be hiring and building are instead saving and paying down debt. The specter of increased taxes will support that trend. Sustainable population growth is the 500 pound gorilla in the room that is increasingly hard to ignore. It is at the root of the inability of either political party to solve the immigration problem. Without immigration, legal and otherwise, we have a below-replacement fertility rate in the United States. With immigration we just about break even, which nevertheless may not give us enough of a working force to pay for the Social Security and Medicaid of the impending flood of Baby Boomer retirees. As far as productivity, it has increased dramatically over the last two decades. The problem is that the benefits of increased productivity have been appropriated by the financial sector. Real wages have stayed the same or, according to some estimates, decreased as prices have risen.

And here, dear readers, is the rest of the story. The last problem mentioned is the one that will prevent a solution for all the others. The continued appropriation of productivity by the financial sector will continue and expand the hardships felt by average citizens. Do not look for solutions from government, for as the actions of the Obama Administration - that great hope for change so quickly subdued by the corporate elite - clearly illustrates, government itself has been appropriated by the financial sector. Nothing in politics today indicates that either political party will do much to change the status quo.

As Jean Monnet said, "People only accept change when they are faced with necessity, and only recognize necessity when a crisis is upon them." We can by all means vote our conscience and our convictions, but don't expect anything to change. Not just yet. The quiet coup orchestrated by the financial sector will ultimately lead to crisis. There is no other outcome to the policies they have designed to enrich themselves. When that crisis comes, then we will have a chance to purge the den of thieves which currently controls the reins of power. Better to batten down our hatches. Save our money, cut our expenses and pay down our debts. Invest wisely. Pay attention. Look to our families, neighborhoods, churches and local organizations for support. Think outside the box. Develop local ties and affiliations and again, pay attention. Pay attention.



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

Get over it

Life is filled with "getters." The whiners are always griping about the getters. They say things like: "Oh, they get the prettiest girls or the most handsome boys;" "They get all the breaks in life", etc. Most of the getters in life got what they have because of their "get up." My grandfather used to identify certain people by saying, "They don't have any 'git up' in them." Well, there are all kinds of "getters" in life and not all of them are pleasant to be around. There are those "getters" who are constantly "getting under your skin" or "getting on your nerves." To keep these people from "getting to you" you have to pray a lot and practice patience or else they will succeed at "getting your goat." Because there are so many "getters" in this world, if you don't "get a grip on yourself" you may "get the short end of the stick." Occasionally, I chance to meet ole "getter up on the wrong side of the bed." Poor fella, his attitude is so bad, if he says good morning to you he makes you mad. Sometimes, I run into ole "getter up with the chickens."

He is always bragging about how early he gets out of bed. I guess he wants to rob some chicken of the worm. Then there are the getters in life who seem to "get away with murder." They are never caught or punished for any unlawful acts they commit. However, don't let that "get your dander up." They are not "getting off easy," they will "get what's coming to them." Maybe not in this life but there is a great "get even day coming." There are some getters that you "get off on the wrong foot" with and you just want to tell them to "get lost." Don't let the "bad getters" sour you on the "good getters." Well, if you have been sitting around talking about the getters in life - Get over it. Don't "get rattled." The preacher said "There is a time to get and a time to lose" (Ecc. 3:6). This is the time to get. The preacher also said, "It is the time to get wisdom and understanding" (Proverbs 4:5). We need to get wise and get together as God's people. This nation needs to "get down to business" with God. We need to "get on the stick" and "get the ball rolling" and "get God's show on the road" if we "get the message" to the world while it is time to get. So let's "get up" and "get at it" telling the world that to "get the best out of life" one must "get to the very heart" of life which is found in Christ Jesus. Now is the time to get life!

Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!
Contact us at 706-896-4454

Deadline for the T.C. Herald is Monday by noon



"At this point it doesn't matter whether my guy or your guy won, as long as our guy does a good job!"

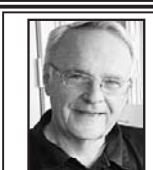


Community Calendar

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 2nd 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 Health 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.
Fall 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.



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Have you noticed that laughter makes some people really nervous?

If there's laughter in the classroom, they reason, can there be much learning going on? If there's laughter in the home can the kids really be getting the training they need?

See, it's my belief that we ought to drive our kids bonkers with the joy they see in us. Joy is not only contagious, it's attractive.

One of the most convincing evidences that you're on to something big is when there is frequent, hardy laughter in your house. Parents learning to laugh at themselves. Turning assignments into games. Laughing your way through spilled milk and misplaced keys.

Quite often when I'm chatting with parents my first suggestion will be, lighten up. Some Moms and Dads live in mortal dread that they are going to commit some single horrendous parenting gaffe and scar their kids for life. So they ratchet up the intensity, apply every rule they can re-

member, and go through the day as focused as a lifeguard at a busy pool.

I remember reading the story of a little boy - maybe three or four - who was getting the milk out of the refrigerator door when he dropped the carton. It hit the floor, splashed all over the place, and lay on its side gushing a puddle of milk beside the kitchen table.

What's a Mom to do? What would you do?

Here's what this Mom did. She picked up the carton and then said something like, "Well, that's one of the biggest messes I've seen for a long time. I think we ought to enjoy that mess before we clean it up, don't you? Take off your shoes and see how it feels to walk around in milk when you're barefooted. Then we'll clean it up."

We can leave our kids with few more valuable legacies than a childhood filled with happy memories.

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

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Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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