

# DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

### Letter to the Editor:

Thanks to our 200 volunteers and financial support from the community we are having a remarkable seventh year of operation. We have served over 20,000 students and adults from Fannin, Towns and Union counties in Georgia, and Clay and Cherokee counties in North Carolina. In 2009-2010 the Education Committee provided or supported programs for 2,911 students.

Fifth grade students attended the Environmental Field Day in April. Fourth grade students learned All About Trees in May. Johnny Appleseed was provided to 934 students last month. Plans are underway for the first grade Feathered Friends program, second grade Water program, and third grade Cabbage Program. Landowners in the region continue to be impressed with the quality of seminars provided by the Outreach Committee. Seminar topics included energy conservation, organic gardening, amending your soil and protecting stream banks. Recent tours of the GMRE Center featured the research orchards, ethnobotanic gardens, new interpretive center and old spring house site. The Preservation Committee continues to encourage the value and preservation of native plants. The Grand Opening Celebration for the Interpretive Center was held on June 5. Over 800 acres on 46 properties in the region have been certified as Appalachian Native Botanical Sanctuaries. A dam was refurbished, forming a pond at the old spring house site, which serves as a beautiful entry feature for the Woodland Medicine Trail.

We appreciate your support of our programs and invite you to "Come Grow With Us" at the GMRE Center.

Sincerely,

*Sandy Nicolette on behalf of the GMREC Community Council*

### Letter to the Editor:

I read with interest the open letter written to the Mountain Fair board of directors. It seems to me that rescinding the obtaining of a beer and wine license is counter-productive. The campground and entertainment complex exist as an opportunity to attract tourists (along with their money) to Towns County.

In the economic climate that the businesses in the county labor in at this time, every effort should be made to enhance the popularity of the area, and it is impossible to deny that the availability of (dare I say it?) alcohol, in the form of beer and wine, would to many people, make spending a little time and money here something they would want to do.

If, as the board has stated, the license is for special events only, it seems we would have little worry in regard to our local people abusing said alcohol and causing any long term problems.

In the case of the Harley Davidson state rally, let me say this: Bikers spend money. They spend it gladly in those places that are happy to have them and almost every business in the county has profited in some way from other biker groups that have found their way here. If a special events beer and wine license is needed to attract needed tourist dollars, the board should go ahead and obtain it.

By the way, I am a biker. (You may have guessed.) Though I don't ride a Harley, I will be happy to see a couple thousand Harley riders visiting Towns County and I will gladly take the opportunity to visit the rally. If you find me there, I will buy you a beer.....a glass of wine.....soda?

Jack Gottlieb



## RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Last time we talked about how we can build joyous memories into what our kids remember about home when they leave. Let's talk about that some more.

One summer about 1970 my two sons and I (I think they were fourteen and eleven) drove a Volkswagen from the state of Washington cross-country to Ohio. If anyone asks, you can tell them that's a long trip in a non-air conditioned Volkswagen. Actually, if anyone asks, in July that's a long trip in a non-air conditioned anything.

Somewhere about midway, I think it was somewhere in South Dakota, (man, it's a long way across South Dakota) we invented a new game to help pass the time. The assignment was that we were each to come up with an idea for a new invention that no one would ever need. Some of our ideas were hilarious. I still remember two of them – a trailer hitch for an airplane, and screen doors for a submarine. We laughed so hard I thought we were going to have to pull

over and stop.

Not long ago the three of us were reminiscing about that trip.

We remembered the game and began recalling some of those bizarre inventions, and even though it was more than forty years ago – and this time we were sitting safely on the front porch – we laughed till we could hardly breathe. That four-day trip remains, for all three of us, one of the great adventures of their growing-up years.

I've thought back to the Saturday nights in front of the fire place, of Frisbee football in the backyard – in the snow, of the time the younger one, about six, got chicken pox and we slipped an egg in his bed to prove it to him. I'd give a hundred dollars cash to have a picture of his face when he saw that egg.

I want my kids to think happy thoughts when they think about home. I know you do, too.

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

### 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 E-MAILED 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,

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## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The written word, lacking the inflection, tone and body language available in a good old fashioned face to face conversation, can be a source of misunderstanding in this modern age of facebook posts and handheld texts. It was during a light-hearted posting of text on one of the popular electronic bulletin boards that I witnessed such a misunderstanding and experienced the discord that incomplete communication can conjure, especially when magnified by our national tendency towards political correctness - which is today's feeble response to our centuries-old habit of dividing all of life into divisions between the sacred and the profane. Follow me now, if you will, down the circuitous path of understanding.

I like cats. We have three. I recently spent half a day constructing a weather-proof, heated cat palace for the wintertime comfort of our feline friends. Cats have been a part of life on the farm as long as I have lived in Towns County, so when a friend posted her frustration at some particular feline behavior towards her chickens, I could relate. As frustration often turns to humor, some lighthearted banter ensued which broached the subject of laboratory cat dissection and favorite cat recipes.

Lovers of all things feline were quick to join the discussion with admonishments. They were not amused, and private messages condemned our dark-hearted humor. My first reaction to the huff of the hall monitors was a desire to tell them all to go and lick themselves. (Patience; we're almost done with cat humor here). Discretion, however, prevailed and led via this cat-food for thought to today's discussion of the sacred and the profane.

As a "rule of thumb," one man's sacred is another man's profane, and even the use of this worn out phrase profanes the women who, under a vague reference to old English Common Law, could not be beaten by their husbands with anything wider than their thumbs, thus the expression. Here's another example: A tattoo to an early Christian was a mark of separation from the pagans but to a modern fundamentalist Christian it can be considered

a mark of the devil. A cartoon of Mohamed to a non-Muslim may be comic relief from the tensions of terror and jihad but to a devout Muslim it is a death sentence.

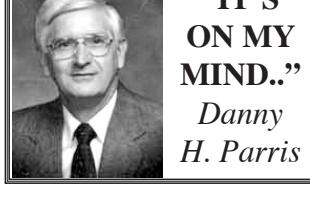
Politicians, pundits and preachers plant landmines of the sacred and the profane on the slippery slopes of their fallacious logic. If you want to reform healthcare, you have profaned the sacred cow of corporatism with a socialist smear. If you trust the free market to level the playing field of healthcare, then you care nothing for the huddled masses. If you are a democrat, you can be nothing but a liberal. If you are a conservative, you can be nothing but a republican. There is no "in between" between the sacred and the profane. Everything is black and white; (no offense to European Americans and African Americans intended) with no shades of gray and definitely no colors in the palette. Dark and Light; Good and Evil; divided we are conquered and conquered we are enslaved.

This is not a commentary on cat lovers versus cat cookers. It is not a judgment of millions of devout Christians or a criticism of dedicated democrats and reliable republicans. It is not a judgment of anyone's spiritual or political path. This is a discussion of dichotomy – a splitting of the whole into two non-overlapping parts – and the biggest, baddest, scorched earth destructive march-to-war dichotomy of them all is the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane. The problem isn't really so much the dichotomy itself, but the aggressive proselytizing of my idea of what is sacred or your idea of what is profane.

History reeks of this aggressive proselytizing: The Crusaders marched around Jerusalem with decapitated heads on pikes. Muslims burned libraries and put "non believers" to the sword. Communist party bosses liberated millions to the equality of starvation and the American hegemony burned down communist villages and then opened up the charcoal business to the free market. If we examine all of these events closely we see individual stories of faith and sacrifice, patriotism and pride, but zoom out to an objective view of history through the lens of time and we see that the death of millions has solved little or nothing as we now face off over the same issues with weapons capable of killing billions.

Some part of our humanity realizes our dilemma. In the western world, political correctness is our muted response. Understand, if you will, from whence it came. It grew out of centuries of war and destruction and social unrest. It is a step towards tolerance, but it is a humorless tolerance and therefore, in my humble opinion, not quite sincere.

We will revisit this topic again because there is much to discover about it, but not right now. I have a cat baking in the oven.



"IT'S  
ON MY  
MIND.."

Danny  
H. Parris

### Just a Landmark?

A few years ago a railroad proposed abandonment of a money-losing spur line running from north eastern Colorado into Nebraska. One man who spoke in opposition to the abandonment proceedings was a vociferous farmer who pleaded that the railroad line was a vital necessity to the area. The railway lawyer asked, "How long has it been since you shipped anything on this railway?" "Well, I don't know as I ever have." The lawyer continued, "How long has it been since you took a trip traveling on this railway?" The old farmer replied, "Probably ten to fifteen years." Somewhat disgusted the lawyer snapped at the old farmer, "Then what difference does it make to you whether this railway is closed down or not?" The farmer, somewhat heated up replied, "Well, hang it all, I walk down almost every night and watch the train go by." Lots of people feel the same way about the church. It is a nice old landmark and they would miss it if it were torn down. However, all other indications revealed him to be a changed man. As the service closed there he was at the altar. He was the center of attention. The pastor stood beside him while family and friends came by. What a tremendous difference! He was no longer present just "in spirit." His body had finally caught up with his spirit!

It really was such a nice funeral.

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