

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY  
**OPINIONS & COMMENTARY**

## Letters to The Editor

### Attention gun owners

Gun owners attention, this was recently reported by Reuters News Service. You probably missed it as it has not received much if any coverage. Our president has devised a plan to circumvent the Second Amendment. ("the right of people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed") The trick is to use the US State Department to bypass the normal legislative process in Congress by signing international treaties with foreign nations.

By signing these international treaties, all US citizens will be subject to those gun laws created by foreign governments. If this is carried out we will wake up one day and find that the US has signed a treaty that requires US citizens to deliver any firearm they own to the local government collection and destruction center or face imprisonment.

If you are old enough to remember WWII then you know this happened in Germany during the 30's. It is not too late to stop this but you must contact our US Senators and Representative and anyone else that you think can help. Read the full article at Reuters News Service October 14th.

Don Washburn

### Fieldstone Cinemas Six

When my wife and I moved to Hiawassee, the closest movie theatre was the small, old theatre in Union County. Shortly thereafter, Fieldstone Cinemas Six opened in Young Harris. The people of Towns, Union and Clay counties now have a nice, clean, and professional multi-plex in which to enjoy first-run movies. We thank the owners and management of Fieldstone Cinemas Six. Although it is enjoyable to see movies in a nice environment, I am greatly disappointed with two decisions made by the management of the Fieldstone Cinemas Six.

The first decision was to stop selling caramel corn. The second was stopping the Thursday "Two for One" admission offer. Both decisions have upset many regular customers of Fieldstone Cinemas Six.

During the time Fieldstone Cinemas Six sold caramel corn, many people enjoyed this delicious delight. Yes, it was unhealthy, fattening, and tasted so good.

The "Two for One" admission offer allowed many people living on a fixed income or who have lost their jobs to enjoy a break from reality for a short time. As one of those living on a fixed income, my wife and I took advantage of the "Two for One" admission offer as often as possible.

Representing many residents of Towns, Union and Clay counties, I am asking the owners and management of Fieldstone Cinemas Six to resume selling caramel corn and the "Two for One" admission program, at least one day each week.

Thank you.

Sincerely  
Christopher D. Mazur

### Life without parole

There is a case currently pending before the U.S. Supreme Court. The issue is whether a life sentence without a chance for parole is, as applied to a juvenile, "cruel and unusual punishment" and therefore constitutionally prohibited. In my opinion, it is not so prohibited. Here are my thoughts:

It is often said that "bad facts make bad law," and certainly polarizing facts are no exception. Each side in the pending case can cite instances supporting its position. One side will say, citing specific (and sometimes prominent) individuals, the juvenile, as have many before him/her, may see the error of his/her ways and go on to become a productive citizen, so why not allow him/her a chance to do so, which he/she cannot do it there is no opportunity for parole. The other side will say, again citing specific (and sometimes notorious) individuals, that the crime was so heinous (e.g., its singular occurrence involved burglary, mutilation, arson and more) an opportunity for parole for a recidivist "punk" ought not be allowed.

Wouldn't it be best if each case was decided on its own specific circumstances? Words that one (especially courts) should not use are "always" and "never." So, subject to appropriate appellate review (some prosecutors are overzealous and some sentencing judges occasionally have a case of "robitis" or want to "send a message") involving a standard of reasonableness, let the trial judge (after die and deliberate consideration, to include specific findings of fact and written bases for his/her decision) decide.

But an absolute rule of unconstitutionality, regardless of the circumstances, is wrong and deprive society of its right to be safe.

Sincerely  
Christopher D. Mazur

### Dear Citizens

To the citizens of Hiawassee, I would like to express my thanks for your support and confidence in my recent campaign. I will endeavor to do the best of my ability in the needs and concerns of the city of Hiawassee, for the next four years.

Sincerely  
Mayor Barbara Mathis

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## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

It usually happens around this time of year, when enough leaves have fallen and the outline of distant ridge lines can be seen through the trees from my front porch. The brilliant white dots of insecurity lights intrude on the darkness from miles away, polluting the night sky and shattering the illusion that there is any place left in this corner of Georgia that is truly remote and secluded. The lords and ladies of the high country loudly (at least in terms of taste and or luminance) proclaim their mastery of electricity and elevation, as if to remind us that there is no escape from development, from progress, from... them; no, not even at night.

In the grand scheme of things and in "light" of war, pandemic and recession, a tacky street light or a rudely pointed insecurity light is, perhaps, hardly worth fretting over. On any other evening I might have turned away with a grumble or failed to notice altogether, if not for a long hike earlier today in the high country where I once roamed as a child. It was almost unrecognizable as the same mountain. Countless trees had been removed and in a process euphemistically known as "under-growing," everything green and growing from the top of the mountain to the silt choked streams at the bottom had been cut down to give potential buyers an illusion of the calm serenity of a manicured forest. Lots had been strategically placed to provide the best views and asphalt had been applied liberally over underground utilities just waiting to shine out across the valley and join the halogen hubris already erasing the night sky from the opposite direction.

In some degree it must be a failure to understand, although the science is available and abundant, and in some measure it must be a choice not to care that the short term profit available from "developing" a steep mountainside is not in anyone's best long term interests. Soil is an incredibly complex system of living organisms and intimately connected with the entire mountain ecosystem. When soil systems are divided, ripped, scraped, stripped of plants and their root systems and paved over, the trophy trees accenting the trophy homes may make it look like a mountain, but the essence of the mountain, the alchemy of plant and animal and mineral that provides homes for millions of organisms and beauty for generations - is effectively dead.

The mountain I visited today is being destroyed so that about a dozen trophy homes can perch on its steep sides and look out across the valley. If every future resident were abducted by aliens, it would still take hundreds of years to repair the damage that has already been done. Hundreds

of acres of irreplaceable beauty have been removed from the common good so that a handful of people can eat, sleep, sit and shave in a box perched high on a mountain where their feet will probably never touch bare earth. Steel gates will prevent the common man from intruding into this domain.

Since the fall of 2007 the constant growl of the bulldozer has been largely silenced in our area. Trees have grown back in some places and with an abundance of rain this summer; the mountains have greened over some of the ugliness. The damage, however, has been done; deep and permanent scars have been cut into the mountains and the ecosystem has been degraded in ways that will not heal. Insanely steep roads that no fire truck will ever travel have eaten into the high country like termites into a foundation. Unless you have taken the time to travel the back roads, you may have no idea just how much more of our high country is doomed should the frenzy to build ever return to this area.

Again, while war rages and climate changes and economies falter, some might consider these ills to be the least of our problems. Besides, it's perfectly legal, (most of) this development, and in our liberally conservative, technologically savvy and politically correct democratic republic - it's perfectly ethical. The truth is, our treatment of our natural heritage, rather than being the least of our problems, is symptomatic of the worst of them, and for those of us still trying to hold on to some kind of connection to earth and sky, to soil and seed and stream, to history, mystery and adventure, to that which is wild and untamed, undivided, unmonitored, undomesticated - and free - it's just plain wrong.

I'm not suggesting that the government condemn all mountain land and preserve it for future generations. It's a nice idea, but our obscenely bloated government busily repeating failed experiments in socialism already has enough problems to occupy it for generations. It is tragic that humankind has devoted so much time and treasure and blood to the unwinnable argument over what unseen things are sacred and which things that can be apprehended by faith alone are holy - when all along and right under our noses something truly sacred, which sustains us with food, water, clean air and lasting beauty - is devoured by the insatiable greed which is a lasting legacy of our civilization.

Lord, help us remember where  
our blessings come from,  
and to whom our thanks is due.



### TIPS FOR 4-H & YOUTH



By:  
Norma  
Flanagan

#### Be careful when frying your holiday turkey

Make sure the turkey is all you fry! In recent years, fried turkey has been gaining on traditional roasted turkey as the holiday dish of choice. But as fried turkey's popularity rises, so do concerns about the safety of deep-fat turkey fryers.

The people who (fry turkeys) say it produces a moister turkey, and it's quicker.

Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., the leading organization in the United States for testing consumer products for safety and conformity to standards, calls the fryers "extremely dangerous."

#### Frying turkey is risky business

Although many assume the dangers of fried foods lie in their fat content, there is no reason to think fried turkey is any less healthy than a regular roasted turkey.

The major risks with frying are safety issues and making sure all the harmful bacteria are killed.

The only way to tell if all the bacteria have been killed is to measure the temperature of the cooked turkey with a food thermometer in several places.

The temperature of a whole turkey must reach 180 degrees Fahrenheit in the innermost part of the thigh, she said. Safety concerns include the stability of the fryers, un-insulated pot handles and lids and the potential for oil spillovers and overheating.

A common cause of turkey-fryer accidents is filling the pot too full of oil, causing the oil to spill over when the turkey is placed in the pot. At cooking temperatures, oil spillovers can result in severe burns.

Because of these concerns, UL has elected to not certify any turkey fryers. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is also investigating the fryers.

Follow safe guidelines

## Community Calendar

**Towns County Water Board Meeting** 3rd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.

**Towns County AARP Chapter 1859** meets the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 2 p.m. Luncheons are held at 1 p.m.

**Towns County Democratic Party** meets at 5:30 every 2nd Thursday of the month at Crossroads Restaurant. Meeting begins at 6. Please call Julie Miller, (706) 896-6076.

**Towns County Republican Party** meets the 1st Tuesday of each month from 5 p.m.-6 p.m. Dinner at Daniels Steak House, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. meeting, 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.

**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 932, 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, mtnregarts-craftsguild.org. mtnregarts-craftsguild@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

If you must use a turkey fryer, the UL has issued these guidelines:

Always use a turkey fryers outdoors a safe distance from buildings and anything else that can burn. Never use turkey fryers on wooden decks or in garages. Make sure you use the fryers on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping. Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units don't have thermostat controls. If you don't watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire. Never let children or pets near the fryer while it's in use. Even after use, never let children or pets near the turkey fryer. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot for hours.

To avoid spillovers, don't overfill the fryer. Use well-insulated pot holders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles. If possible, wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter. Make sure the turkey is completely thawed, and be careful with marinades. Oil and water don't mix, and water causes oil to spill over, which could cause a fire or explosion hazard. The National Turkey Federation recommends thawing the turkey in the refrigerator, allowing about 24 hours for every 5 pounds of turkey. Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Remember, use your best judgment when attempting to fight a fire. If the fire is manageable, use an all-purpose fire extinguisher. If it grows, call 911 immediately for help.

#### Consumer hotline numbers include:

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline, 1-800-535-4555 or 1-800-256-7072/TTY, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST year-round. An extended menu of recorded food safety messages can be heard 24 hours a day.

Butterball Turkey Talk Line, 1-800-BUTTERBALL (1-800-288-8372), 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. EST. Full daily calendar of hours is available at www.butterball.com.

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

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/blueridge-mountains.

**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.

**Old Fashioned Square Dance Lessons** each Mon. in Hiawassee, GA, 6 p.m. at the Senior Center (2 blocks south of the town square, beside the Courthouse) Hiawassee, GA 706-896-1060