

# DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

### Letter to the Editor:

Blue Ridge Electric sent me an explanation for their unreasonable bill. It seems they had planned the building of the new infrastructure before the decline in the economy occurred, when the housing market fell apart, construction ground to a halt, foreclosures were everywhere, businesses closed their doors and of course Blue Ridge meters declined dramatically but instead of putting things on hold they decided to go ahead anyway and put the load on their members even though most are struggling and cannot afford it. I don't know about anyone else but my bill has doubled even though Blue Ridge claimed the increase would only be around \$1.49 a customer. Until 2008 the customer charge was a hidden charge until Rural Electrification made them declare it. They even state in their explanation that the customers left have to foot the bill and I quote "Our growth advantage has been removed and yet we still have to pay for the new infrastructure - in addition to the customer service charge increase we will also increase the KWH charge". They do not explain the new meters which was another expenditure that was unnecessary. They can sit in their easy chair and read these meters yet they claim they have to cover the cost of reading the meter, billing the customer and collecting payments even though if you don't send the payment they charge \$20 to come out and collect. They go on to say they have cut costs by retiring 14 employees. These people receive large retirement pensions so where is the saving? Blue Ridge is a large company abusing their power with the conviction they are untouchable.

Ruth Nelson

### Letter to the Editor:

I regret the delay to comment on our local tourism association. We own a bed and breakfast in Hiawassee which we bought in 2005. We are the third owners and the bed and breakfast will be 20 years old in February, 2011. We feel we have brought the business from being practically unknown to a popular and relaxing place to getaway. We love the fact that Hiawassee still has that small-town feel, but know that the area needs growth to survive. The lacking economy has hit hard a lot of small businesses as well as larger ones. We are usually over-run with inquiries and fill up during the major festivals at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. We were outraged after reading in the Towns County Herald on August 11, 2010 about the popularity of the Moonshine Cruise-in, which visited Hiawassee for the second time for their annual August event. We are most excited about the popularity of this event and it being held in Hiawassee, but all lodging options WERE NOT full! Does our tourism association know about every lodging option in the area? This was the first year we had NO bookings for this event. This July was the slowest July we've ever seen, especially during the Summer Fair at the fairgrounds. We had no bookings during the week for either the Summer Fair or the Fall Festival. If tourism is truly replacing real estate as Towns County's economic arm then ALL small businesses need help!

Mariah Nugent

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

We approach the holiday season each year with a variety of choices between thanksgiving and misgivings. For many the holidays are a welcome relief from the drudgery of commuting to the cubicle. Fellowship with family and friends and the festivity of traditions from around the world blended together in a uniquely American way is something that sustains us from the darkening days of October well into the next year.

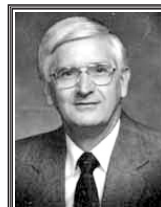
For some of us the holidays are less than festive when we are basted in happy images of perfect families feasting from a cornucopia of material prosperity; images which invite us to compare or own less sparkling reality to something that is, for most people, virtual and unattainable. Holiday marketing does for many of us what images of half starved, made-over models "Photoshopped" for magazine covers does for the self esteem of "average" young girls who compare themselves to pictures of glittering unreality and forget their own innate beauty.

Holidays are a much needed break in routine for most of us, but for many the busy routine is some protection from the remembrance of things past - and when that routine is broken, holidays can be a reminder of the empty seats at the table, the companions who have passed on, the children who have grown up and gone away. I will always remember visiting my favorite aunt in the nursing home during her last Christmas on this earth, the miniature decorations in her window, the way she sat quiet and alone in her room, staring out of the window and across the years...

Many Americans will enjoy the holidays with considerably less material prosperity than they did last year. A decade of grim headlines and color coded fears will end this year with the weakest dollar of our lifetimes, with high unemployment and higher

prices for food and fuel. Some of us who have spent a lifetime measuring success and gauging happiness in terms of material things will have a chance to shift our awareness this year. We can choose to be thankful for the friends and family we still have while so many are alone, for the job we complain about when so many have none, for the opportunities that this great land still produces and for the freedoms we have and take for granted. We will gather and we will feast as we have done in the past, but perhaps this year our festivities will be tempered by a greater awareness of the planet we live in - and perhaps by a little more compassion for our fellow travelers.

We know not the number of our days and as the wheel of time turns, many things diminish. My own circle has grown smaller over the years and there will be many empty seats around the table at Thanksgiving. I do not know how many more days I will be privileged to share a meal or enjoy a holiday with loved ones. When we are young we spend our days like tossing coins into a fountain. Nature tells me that for some loved ones there are fewer coins remaining than have been spent, but oh how precious is this treasure and how golden. There is true prosperity and a source of heartfelt thanksgiving.



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

### Pumpkins and pilgrims

Each year Thanksgiving seems to be more difficult to observe. In fact, it is almost crowded out of our holidays. Secular society puts the squeeze on Thanksgiving. Halloween gets more popular each passing year and commercial Christmas promotions are in place before Halloween is celebrated, leaving almost no official time to give thanks. Because there exists such a tremendous anti-Christian resentment in our nation, some people are intimidated about giving thanks. They are confused. Who do I give thanks to? The great pumpkin! The pilgrims! They are like the little fourth grader who stood before the class to give a report concerning the origins of the Thanksgiving holiday. He said, "The pilgrims came here seeking freedom of you know what, when they landed, they gave thanks to you know who. Because of them, we can worship each Sunday, you know where." Charles Colson told about a Thanksgiving a few years ago, when he asked his eight-year-old grandson why the pilgrims celebrated Thanksgiving. His reply, "Because they were thankful." Colson went on to ask his grandson "to who were the pilgrims thankful?" He said, "I suppose they were thanking the Indians, that's what we learned at school." I hope you know to whom we ought to give thanks and that you aren't afraid to call His name. His name is Jesus. It is absolutely disgraceful that a lot of our young people don't know the true story of Thanksgiving. The pressure is being applied for our nation to forget and remove God

from receiving any thanks from anyone. I am reminded that on April 30, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation for a national day of fasting, humiliation and prayer. The proclamation read thus: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten the gracious hand, which preserved us in peace, multiplied, enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to God that made us! It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and pray for clemency and forgiveness."

God is offended when we fail to acknowledge and give Him praise and thanks for all things! A dear lady's husband had died and she went to the newspaper to have his obituary printed. The editor informed her the price would be 50 cents for each word. She said, "Fine." "Put it like this: "Fred Brown died." The editor knew the poor lady was trying to be thrifty but he had to tell her there was a minimum of seven words. He said, "You must have seven words." "In that case", she said, "Put it like this: Fred Brown died, 1983, pickup for sale." There are places to be thrifty but when it comes to thanksgiving God wants us to be loud, vocal and extravagant. Pumpkins and pilgrims have their place but it is wise and right to give thanks to Almighty God!

## RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Quite often I am approached by parents who are super-serious about their kids. I know a lady who would go to the library every week and bring home a different book on parenting. She digested each one, but soon discovered that this week's book taught something different from last week's book. When one of her kids disobeyed she was frantic, fearing that she was doing something wrong as a mother.

We were having dinner at my parents' place one summer when our sons were probably eleven and eight. As someone passed a large dish of green beans to my dad, he didn't have a good hold of it and it slipped out of his hands...upside down...onto his lap. The beans were hot. I didn't know he could dance like that.

Mom got towels and started mopping up the juice; someone came with a dustpan and began scooping up the beans. Dad dribbled bean juice down the hall to change clothes.

When everyone returned to the table to resume the meal, it was our eight-year

old who broke the silence. "I'm glad it wasn't me that dropped the beans," he observed, "or I would sure have got in trouble." Unfortunately he was probably right. But that event helped me remember to distinguish between an accident and a rebellious spirit in dealing with my kids. Accidents are part of being human; that reality needs to temper my response.

Is it always going to be deliriously happy around your house? As the kids say, Get real! Actually, I prefer the word "Joyous" to "Happy," anyway. Happy is related to "happen," and it most accurately describes the attitude of one who is affected by what "happens" around them. True joy on the other hand is not affected by circumstances. Not by wealth or poverty, not by sickness or health. Or by spilled beans.

Our kids are helped as much by watching their parents' stable, joyous attitude as they are by about anything we do. Remember, joy is contagious.

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

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## Community Calendar

### Towns County Herald

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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.

**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 Unicorn 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, mtntregartscraftsguild.org, mtntregartscraftsguild@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.  
**Full 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.