

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

**Letters to The Editor**

**Message for Big, Strong Men**

Can you gulp a 12 oz Bud Light and toss the empty aluminum can 50 feet over the road bank from a moving pickup? If so, read on. I am one of those people who believe there are better places to deposit trash than along the side of the road. You may see me sometimes walking along the roads in my community picking up other peoples' cast offs. No, I am not going to ask you to stop throwing your litter out the window. I know that attitudes and habits of a life time cannot be changed that easily. However, age and stiff, sore muscles and joints are making it harder and harder for me to climb down steep road banks to retrieve the things you have thrown out. So I am asking you to kindly toss your stuff a little closer to the edge of the road where it won't be so hard to pick up. An even better idea would be to recycle the aluminum cans and plastic bottles that you are throwing out. In Union County you can even drop them off at your local fire station every Wednesday morning from 8-12 a.m. saving you a drive to town. What do you say?

Wm. Ronald Gibson

**Truly Thankful**

This past Tuesday the Towns County Food Pantry distributed Thanksgiving food boxes to 514 families that have found themselves in need of assistance due to difficult circumstances. These 514 families do not fit into any one demographic: They are the senior citizens that have worked hard all their lives, but now find themselves having to choose between buying food or their medication each month. They are the middle-aged who have found themselves without a job and have spent what was supposed to be their retirement trying to keep their homes. They are young couples with children that were planning for their future and now find it hard to even plan for dinner.

All of this may sound depressing but during the Thanksgiving distribution, there was so much more than food being given, there was the sharing of love between neighbors. The people that received the food expressed sincere gratitude to the volunteers that so generously gave of their time and energy. There was the elderly lady, whose face has aged so much from her recent hardships, who giggled like a young girl at the sight of her Thanksgiving turkey. There was the man who couldn't get the words to come out because of the tears flowing from his eyes, knowing his family would have Thanksgiving dinner. There was the young boy who was excited over the fact that he was going to have pumpkin pie, yet was confused why his mother was crying and happy at the same time. So you can see 514 is a number but each one of those behind that number has a name, a face and a story all their own.

The Towns County Food Pantry is funded by donations from area churches, businesses, and individuals. This year has been especially hard to raise funds as the difficult economic down turn has continued to affect so many here in the Georgia mountains. We wanted to express our sincere appreciation to all of you that have found it in your heart to donate to this wonderful ministry. This goes out to each and every donor, because every dollar, every can of food, and every hour of volunteer work donated, has helped us to feed those hungry here at home.

The number of people in need has been going up and all indicators point to the fact that the number of people in need is going to increase drastically over the next few months. The pantry accepts and appreciates donations of all types of food, but to be distributed the food must be unopened, in original package and in date. We do solicit monetary donations because we can and do purchased 90% of our food from the Athens Food Bank. Through the Athens Food Bank we can purchase food for 18 cents a pound. Whether chicken or carrots, only 18 cents. Because of this a \$20.00 donation allows us to purchase almost 112 pounds of food.

We are simply neighbors helping neighbors, so if you or someone you know is in need of food assistance, please contact the pantry. If you are interested in getting involved in this great ministry, you are welcome to come by the pantry, Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., located at 1294 Jack Dayton Circle-- or for more information call 706-896-4783. If you would like to make a monetary donation, make check payable to Towns County Food Pantry, mail to P. O. Box 42, Hiawassee, Ga. 30546.

Wm. Ronald Gibson

**The Middle Path**

by Don Perry

"The best argument against democracy is a five minute conversation with the average voter." -Winston Churchill

In the Harry Potter storyline, the name of the "Dark Lord" is never spoken aloud for fear of giving energy to the forces of darkness. "Speak of the devil and he's sure to appear" is an ancient warning along the same lines. During the presidential campaigns of 2008 I was reluctant to speak the name of a particular candidate for a similar illogical reason; a candidate whose name, to many thinking people, still elicits an unpleasant, visceral reaction. After the presidential election of 2008 I somewhat naively thought that it would no longer be necessary to speak the name of Sarah Palin again.

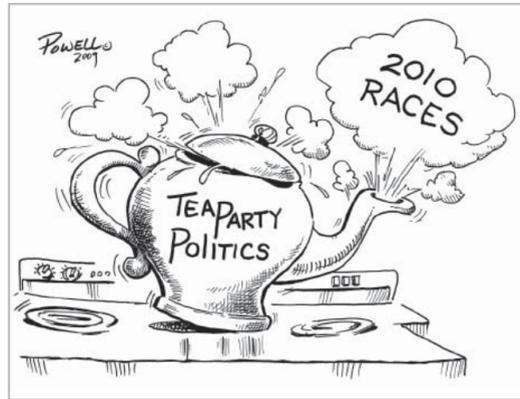
Why would anyone who takes the political process seriously think otherwise? Palin publicly lied on several well documented occasions and she clearly presented herself as an ambitious but unstable personality with questionable ethics. Yes, I know, that description could apply to many who hold and who have held public office, but I thought that surely on this occasion Americans would be wiser. If anyone had any doubts as to her unsuitability for office after examining her record, listening to her speeches and reading her "own" words, surely the desertion of her post as governor of Alaska (and her fuzzy explanation of this decision) would clarify the issue. For many Americans, apparently this is not the case.

We have vented on several occasions our frustrations with the American political class and the corruption which often both precedes and succeeds election to office. With Palin we have the unique opportunity to witness the genesis of another aspirant to that class. Her incoherent explanation of the decision to spare her family the pain of finishing her term as governor (but

not the pain of national exposure) rings false. The ego which readily accepted that the comedian playing a prank on her was actually a world leader calling to consult a vice presidential candidate - reveals itself as clearly as we will ever see ego openly displayed in a candidate. "All" of our political leaders claim to have our best interests at heart and trumpet the sacrifices they have made to serve us. Many have been around for so long that their questionable beginnings are far beyond our short attention spans, but in Palin we have the opportunity to recognize and heed the early warning signs of the worst our political system produces, and to choose otherwise.

However, for many Americans, celebrity status appears to be the determining factor when choosing a candidate. Look no further than the election of a relatively unknown and certainly untested senator from Illinois to the office of President of the United States. Obama looked good - and he communicated intelligently. Palin looks good, which is an undeniable part of her attraction (a majority of Palin supporters are male) but her message, if she has one, is all over the map. What Palin and her handlers do seem adept at is positioning her to be a lightning rod for frustrated and disaffected voters, and this is a problem for the Republican party which may in turn become a problem for the nation.

In a recent poll, twenty eight percent of Americans believed Palin to be qualified for the White House. However, 54 percent of Republicans thought she was qualified. The balance of Bush and Obama would be a candidate who believes in limited government and fiscal responsibility. Traditionally, those candidates have come from the Republican Party. If Palin stays in the mix, the Republican Party may be divided beyond the ability to produce a legitimate national candidate.



**From the desk of John Oxendine**  
 Georgia's Insurance and Fire Commissioner

Dear Friends, Thanksgiving is a time when we can pause to reflect on those blessings each of us have received, and thank God for them. Granted, we face difficult and trying times as a country, a state, and especially in our individual lives. Yet, despite all the challenges, there is much to be thankful for—freedom, health and relationships—just to name a few. I Thessalonians 5:18 says, "In everything give thanks." It certainly is not always easy.

This year as we gather with friends and family to eat good food, watch football, and reminisce, I hope you and yours will say a special Thanksgiving prayer for all those Americans in the U.S. military and diplomatic corps around the world who will be away from home. Many of those serving are on the front lines of freedom—some in harm's way.

As you give thanks before the Thanksgiving meal, let us all remember those less fortunate than us and make it a point to reach out to a faith organization and volunteer or make a donation to support our fel-

low citizens in need this holiday season.

Ivy and I have so much for which to be thankful. God blessed our family by adding Jake this year. We have our marriage, and our health, and especially our family. We have both old and new friends who have encouraged us by supporting the campaign in dozens of different ways. And please know that your support means much to me as I am blessed to have you as part of our campaign family.

Enjoy this Thanksgiving Day. Give thanks to God for all His blessings. I leave you with this quote from President Ronald Reagan. "Perhaps no custom reveals our character as a Nation so clearly as our celebration of Thanksgiving Day. Rooted deeply in our Judeo-Christian heritage, the practice of offering thanksgiving underscores our unshakable belief in God as the foundation of our Nation and our firm reliance upon Him from Whom all blessings flow." President Ronald Reagan, Thanksgiving Day, 1986. Happy Thanksgiving from John and Ivy.



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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@brmemc.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 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 Center, 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.  
**CVFV 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/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

**Community Calendar**

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**Towns County Herald**

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