

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Words of wisdom

Gordon G. Allison, born 9/29/1929 in Atlanta, GA, grew up in a nine room two story columned home with his doctor dad, mom and four grandparents. That was in the old Cascade Heights area and a huge backyard where "Gordy" learned to drive at age twelve in a 1934 Plymouth and was issued a special certificate to drive at age thirteen by the local police department.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



Attending Russell HS Gordon had problems with grades and the teaching staff awarded him with punishment, not understanding nor trying to understand he was born with a form of dyslexia. His dad, fully supportive of his son, sent him to the excellent Toccoa Falls Bible Scholarship School for "gifted" students and Gordon's grades accelerated. Gordon speaks highly of this school and the ministers and teachers who developed a teaching "workaround" for his seeming inability to read and pass tests. He graduated along with other dyslexics who perhaps accelerated in music but had trouble otherwise.

Back to Cascade Heights as a mechanic, fully encouraged by his dad, recognizing his son's very special skills, diagnosing and repairing mechanical and electrical machinery didn't last. Drafted into the Army, he was sent to Korea in the 2nd Infantry Division attached to the MP Company. It was there that his special skills were discovered for repairing equipment and was given the task of keeping all the jeeps and trucks running. That's not the end of his special skills. Due to his dyslexic condition he could spot Communist gun emplacements way up in the mountains unseen and undetected any other way! That too, became one of Gordon's special jobs. He was like "human radar" way ahead of Gordon's special jobs. There were a lot of American lives saved because of his skills. Sadly though, one afternoon, an artillery shell exploded above, almost destroying Gordon's right knee. While suffering through surgery and the relative healing process he contracted Rheumatic Fever which has left him tormented with arthritis throughout his body and a crippled leg ever since.

Nevertheless, he returned to southwest Atlanta as a mechanic, never for Eastern Airlines, also taking advantage of his special mechanical skills, sending him to every Eastern Airline airport in the southeast for ground equipment repair that no one else could fix. Bureaucrats, being bureaucrats, found him and his special skills helping out a pilot by repairing and plugging in a power cable on an aircraft. A "reprimand" was in order as the government "knowing best" contrived, "you are not an authorized aircraft mechanic"; all leading to his retirement and moving to Hiawassee with a small private auto shop in his home on Sunnyside.

Serving for years as VFW Post 7807 Quartermaster, Life and AL PUFLL member, he put it, "I always got to do what I wanted to do." Adding "There is nothing wrong with serving in our military." A word of wisdom, "Don't worry about what you can't do, but do what you can do."

We are blessed to know such men.

Semper Paratus

The siblings - Faith and Opinion

We usually avoid discussing religion here. I consider it a personal matter, and there are many who are much more qualified to address it. When it comes to Faith, however, we will speak. Faith is a golden thread that runs through all religious and spiritual beliefs. It is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. Our lives are often defined by its presence, or its absence. It is odd that many will shy away from anything that references Faith, but be quite content with any number of opinions. We should know that Faith and Opinion are siblings.

I have a friend who considers himself an atheist and a secular humanist. He has faith that the inherent goodness of human beings will inevitably move us onward and upward. We debate from time to time our opinions about what is true and what is not. Our discussions about what is true sometimes do not end well, but our conversation is usually more amicable when we discuss what is useful. My friend finds no usefulness at all in religion, and through the filters of his own tragedy and disillusionment he quickly identifies the bloodshed that throughout the ages has accompanied religion like a shadow.

My usual retort to his universal condemnation of religion is to point to the uncountable examples of individual sacrifice and devotion which have also accompanied religion and shined light into the shadows.

A particularly animated discussion we have results from my assertion that humankind needs Faith, and falling short of that still benefits from religion. My point being that we need a code of some kind as a framework for our decision making process. We value things. We need values. We need something larger and more important than our individual appetites.

Even Science is still arguing whether such civilizing influences are innate or inborn or whether they must be taught. My friend thinks that they are innate and require only nurturing. His opinion is at odds with billions of people gathered under the banners of Christianity and Islam and all of their many divisions, who believe that we are born to a legacy of "Original Sin."

You would hope that two religions which share so much of the same history and so many of the same beliefs would find it easier to locate their common interests, but history has shown this to be difficult, though we suspect that politics has had more to do with the animosity between the two belief systems than anything else.

By the same token, you would think that liberals and conservatives who share a nation, a history and a culture would also be able to get along better, but this is proving to be increasingly difficult. Again, we suspect politics, or more precisely, the power struggles that are being played out behind the political facade, but that is a discussion for another time.

My friend and I do agree on one thing, and that is how belief that is mutated by politics can result in behavior that is almost indistinguishable from religious fervor. And now, as my grandfather used to say, I'm going to "quit preaching and go to meddling." We will begin with the behavior of some of our conservative friends. For many years the right has condemned the lifestyles and personal choices of people who do not conform to their beliefs about what is true. Some have judged based on their own research or reading of Scripture, but if we are honest we will admit that most simply echo other people's opinions, most often those delivered from such perceived positions of authority as a pulpit. We become what we think and we think what we hear, and our thinking becomes a kind of faith often informed more by interpretation than by fact. The left has had a legitimate grievance against those on the right who have set aside Christian principles of universal love and non-judgment in favor of dogmatic discrimination.

On the left we have a gathering of people less informed by religious belief. This is certainly not true of everyone who gathers there, but few would argue against the observation that the left is more secular (and the right more religious), and statistics support that observation. But while the left often rejects a framework of values informed by religion (Christianity in particular), it can be hard to describe what, if anything, has replaced that framework.

Herein lies the problem as I see it. A kind of relativism has moved into the vacuum formed by the departure of religion, where "right and wrong" are at best a thing of cultural context and at worst a variable based upon personal appetites.

Humans don't seem to find much success as independent agents responsible, and accountable, for their own actions. We have always sought after structure and guiding principle, and where none exist, we eventually invent them. What seems to guide many on the left right now is a mutant form of "tolerance." On the surface, the values they champion are very similar to the core principles of Christianity: universal love and respect for individual rights.

Gathered under the banner are advocates of women's rights, sexual freedom, racial justice - at a glance just about every group which has at one time or another felt the judgment of the religious right. But while the ideals of the left are sound (and not all that different than those of the right), there is a growing element of militancy in the thinking of some of the left's more passionate devotees.

This militancy frames what should be simple differences of opinion that could be solved by our still functioning political process into a "fight" against "injustice, racism, bigotry, misogyny." There is a laundry list of grievances that must be "fought," in the language of the devotees. And the extreme manifestation of this "fight" can be found in the numerous stories of conservative speakers violently attacked simply because they are conservative, and in the widespread use of violent language to describe those on the right.

It is a cruel irony that the left now hosts an element of devotees who are ready to "fight" with an almost religious fervor, or a hatred that mimics tragic examples of national zeal. They view anyone guided by conservative or Christian principles - or anyone who disagrees with the left - as possessed by as many flaws as were attributed to any racial or ethnic slur ever made. Such embers are always smoldering at the roots of every civilization. We will continue to discuss those who are intent on fanning those embers into flame.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Pollen

Spring is in the air and if you're like me, you can definitely feel it. It's not the warmer temperatures, the buds breaking or peaches blooming. For me, it's the familiar coughing, sneezing and itchy eyes caused by pollen! Though spring brings beautiful flowers and prime birdwatching times, it's hard to enjoy any of it if you can't breathe due to the yellow dust that is soon to cover everything.

The official start of "pollen season" is when trees start to bloom, and I've seen peach, plum and ornamental trees break their dormancy all over the county this month. Though pollen is necessary for plant reproduction and nearly impossible to avoid, there are ways that you can reduce the effects of this pesky plant product.

If you have severe allergies, the first steps you can take to get rid of pollen in your house is to prevent it from ever entering. Keeping shoes outside and doormats at all entrances can keep pollen outside. For those with carpet, it is very easy to bring pollen inside where it is trapped in the carpet fibers, stirring up every time foot traffic walks across. Keeping shoes outside keeps your rugs and fabrics pollen free.

Similarly, if you plan to be working outside for a while, dress in layers that can be removed before entering your house. Having an extra laundry bin by the entryway can be a great way to isolate outside clothes and prevent pollen from infiltrating your home.

Pets are also major sources of pollen contamination, but don't worry! You don't need to keep them outside to suffer the pollen they bring in. You just need to ensure your comfort. Keep a damp cloth or sponge on hand to at least wipe of your pet's feet. On heavy pollen days, you may want to keep a damp hand towel on hand to wipe down your pet's fur to get rid of as much pollen as possible. Trust me, on a hot day, there's nothing a dog loves more than a rub down with a nice cool cloth! Cats might prove to be a little bit of a challenge, though.

Though you may want to open your windows to enjoy the beautiful weather, this is the worst thing you can do if you are trying to keep pollen out of your house. Even windows with screens on them still allow large amounts of pollen through where it settles on floors, curtains, furniture and most other surfaces.

Unfortunately, even if you follow all of these recommendations, it's likely that you'll still need to do a decent amount of "spring cleaning" to fight the constant battle against pollen. Use damp cloths to wipe down surfaces and vacuum often. You should also wear a mask when doing yardwork such as mowing the lawn even if you're not highly allergic to pollen, as repeated exposure to an allergen can actually cause a new allergy to develop.

Keep an eye out for plants that produce a lot of pollen and try to remove them from your property or avoid them during pollen season. Do not pull goldenrod though! Many of the allergies blamed on goldenrod are actually caused by ragweed. This is because though goldenrod does have pollen, its particles are smooth and round, whereas ragweed's are coarse and rough, irritating eyes and sinuses. Goldenrod is important for pollinators so it's a great plant to have on your property.

Though they may seem inconvenient, these steps will greatly help to reduce the amount of pollen in your home and let you and your guests enjoy spring without runny noses and weepy eyes.

UGA extension
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

Can some one please explain to me why, the GDOT spent all of that money to fix new traffic lights and crosswalks and all, did not have sense enough to put turning lane lights at the other locations and all, like they have in front of KFC and Burger King in Blairsville?

The other locations, you sit and wait and wait and burn a tank of gas waiting for the chance to warp out in front of some one, and many times that has happened to me and I have had to lock down my brakes, or wait for some one in the middle of the road to turn, while my light is on green for me to go, vehicles behind me blowing their horn! But what am I to do, go forward and hit them?

Makes no sense at all having two signal lights, and neither one having a turn light/arrow!

*Thank You,
 Delores A. Barnes*

To the Editor:

Some time ago I heard it estimated that if we were to build a computer to truly match the capability of the human brain, that computer would be roughly the size of Texas. With the advances in microelectronics that have occurred since, maybe that estimate needs to be adjusted downward toward "Dallas" or maybe even Cowboys Stadium. But Mr. Jobson would have us believe that such an incredible organ such as the human brain came about completely by accident with no outside intervention or design effort... in violation of the laws of thermodynamics. I believe it's the atheist instead who believes in fairy tales.

Additionally I would ask Mr. Jobson to show us where the phrase "wall of separation between church and state" appear in the Constitution. The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment says "Congress shall pass no law...". This clause puts limits on The Federal Government, not believers among the citizenry.

I suspect Mr. Jobson is neither a man of science nor a constitutional scholar.

Jim Soltys

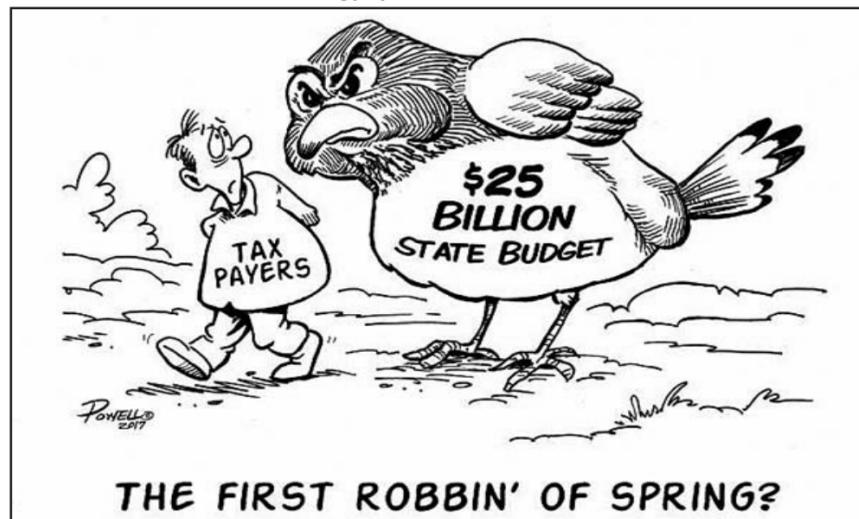
GUEST COLUMNS

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, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.



Towns County Community Calendar

Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Every Tuesday:		
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Every Wednesday		
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Every Thursday:		
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Every Friday:		
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Every Sunday:		
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Third Monday of each month:		
Hospital Auxiliary	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 pm
Third Tuesday of each month:		
YH Plan Comm.	YH City Hall	5 pm
Co. Comm. Mtg	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Blairsville store	5:30 pm
Third Wednesday of each month:		
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
MOAA	Call Jack @ 828-321-2896	
Third Thursday of each month:		
Friendship Comm.	Clubhouse	6 pm
Third Saturday of each month:		
Goldwing Riders	Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
Fourth Monday of each month:		
Red Cross DAT	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Fourth Tuesday of each month:		
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Fourth Thursday of each month:		
Republican Party	New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
Fourth Friday of each month:		
Square Dance Club	Rec. Center	7 pm
Last Thursday of each month:		
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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