

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

It's just a matter of time, or is it?

On December 2, 2014, a scheduled Hiawassee City Council meeting was held at City Hall. The intent of such meetings is supposedly the free exchange of ideas, information and issues between concerned citizens and the Council. That is NOT what happened.

The agenda states "The time allocated for Public Presentations is 15 minutes." Mayor Mathis stated each speaker would be allowed 5 minutes. City Manager Stancil stated only three people would be allowed to speak as the total time was 15 minutes. If you were not on the agenda you would not be allowed to speak.

Four people were on the agenda to speak. Two of them were progress reports to the council.

Noel and Jan Waite were number three on the agenda. Mr. Waite spoke first and was interrupted several times by Mr. Stancil and the City Attorney, Ms. McConnell, using up his time.

Mr. Waite asked for a clarification of the "Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances." Ms. McConnell stated she would "NOT discuss legal terms with a lay person". It would have to be done through an attorney. The Council members are "lay" people too. City Taxes pay the City Attorney's salary. Who discussed legal terms with the Council?

Mrs. Waite stood up to make her presentation and was told she could not speak as her husband had used up their time. Police officers escorted Mrs. Waite out of the meeting.

About half the attendees also left the meeting. Those remaining were chanting of "let her talk, let them speak". Mr. Stancil told the audience to "be quiet or they would all be escorted out."

Did Mr. and Mrs. Waite get answers to their concerns? NO!

Were the citizens of Hiawassee well served by the actions of the City Council? You be the judge.

John L. Holmes
Taxpayer
Property Owner
Hiawassee Resident



**RARE KIDS;
WELL DONE**
By Don Jacobsen

My wife and I travel quite a lot so we often find ourselves eating in restaurants. That can be dangerous to your health if you're not wary, but some of the most interesting people we meet are waiters and waitresses. Let me tell you about Jenny.

No sooner were we seated than Jenny made a high-energy appearance at our table. Over the next thirty minutes or so we would get well acquainted with Jenny...and with her two children, a girl 7 and a boy 10. She whipped their picture out of the same apron pocket where she kept her order pad; it was obvious she was not the first patrons she had shown it to. Cute kids.

When she found out that I write and speak for parents she wanted to make sure I understood how well she was doing as a single, working-full-time mom. She had a fresh "for instance" and between courses she described it.

Seems the 10-year old had been developing a sassy, disrespectful manner with his mom. She called him on it a few times, but it didn't seem to register. Finally she decided she needed to get his attention. After one particularly sharp exchange she warned him that if he didn't clean up his mouth she would

have to clean it up for him. That warning lasted only a few minutes. Mom decided the time had come to be decisive. She took him in the bathroom, broke off a fragment of a bar of soap and told him he had to hold it in his mouth for ten minutes.

I remember my mom threatened more than once to wash my mouth out with soap. Fortunately, I got the message and it never happened. (My wife was not so fortunate when she was about 8.) It worked with Jenny's 10-year old, though he was not a happy camper. After school the next day he reported that he could still taste the soap. Interestingly though, the drastic measure almost immediately cleaned up his language. Note: I'm not urging this as the punishment-of-choice, you understand, I'm just illustrating one example of leadership parenting.

Jenny's observation intrigued me. She reflected, "I don't think my kids always like me, but they always know I love them. Meanwhile I'm helping them become the kind of respectful, obedient kids they ought to be." We were so distracted we didn't even order dessert.

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

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

We bid a reluctant farewell to the holidays last weekend. The decorations are put away (except for those of us who insist on observing at least 12 full days of Christmas). Our waistlines are slightly more prosperous than they were before the holidays began and we are hopeful that our healthy resolutions for the New Year will endure.

No matter how we choose to observe the winter holidays, the world can always use any and all incentives for peace and good will. We need relief from the grinding routines of money-seek. We need encouragement in the face of the many hazards of our complex, violent and frightening world.

We know that the world is complex, violent and frightening because we are reminded that this is so at every possible moment through every conceivable medium. Around the world epidemics rage, terror threatens and airplanes fall out of the sky. The daily litany of shootings, stabbings and scandals, bombings and beheadings will not allow us to forget that the world is an awful place to live. Thank goodness we have "Dancing With the Stars" and buy-one-get-one-free to give us temporary relief from the burden of these terrible truths.

The evidence seems overwhelming. The democrats are going to destroy the country if the republicans don't do it first. The stock market is going to crash any minute now. Ebola is sneaking across the border and lying in wait. And when we compare notes around the water cooler on these harbingers of doom, we unconsciously raise our eyebrows and tilt our heads with the same matter-of-fact seriousness as the newscaster, just before she broke into a smile to report the football scores.

Fortunately, there are pathways to permanent relief from impending doom. The most direct way unfortunately seems to be the most difficult: Simply turning off media or being selective in our choices of what we allow to breach our awareness is unlikely. We are not educated for discernment or self-actualization.

However, if you read this column on a regular basis, chances are that the previous generalization does not apply to you. Chances are that you are a goat among the sheep and more than capable of independent thought and action.

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.**

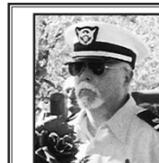
This second pathway is for you. It does require a little research, but the results are worth the trouble. You might begin with a recent study in the prestigious medical journal, *The Lancet*, which reveals that global life expectancy now stands at an all-time high, up 6 years since 1990. In Rwanda and Ethiopia life expectancy has risen by 15 years. Since 1990 the number of people living in extreme poverty has been cut in half.

There is more good news if you're willing to look for it. The Aviation Safety Network reports that, despite several high profile accidents, 2014 was the safest year to fly - ever. How about a raised eyebrow for that statistic, CNN?

What about impending race wars and the epidemic of police violence? A quick check of Department of Justice and Census Bureau numbers would reveal that violent crime in America is near historic lows. Fox News and the Channel 2 Nightly Shooting Report seemed to have missed out on this bit of information.

In conclusion, it would behoove us, as always, to be as discerning in our diet of information as we were in our New Year's resolutions to eat better. Junk food for the mind is at least as plentiful as junk for the body. Let us encourage each other to make better choices for all that we digest.

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The Veterans' Corner

By
Scott Drummond,
USCG Veteran

The backbone of America: Our veterans

Our unique small town America, Towns County, GA is blessed to have a contingent of America's solid citizens, our veterans of all five branches of our nation's military. It's not hard to recognize, honor and respect these men and women, who may be standing right beside you. It's real easy to give a special smile, grin, handshake or "thank you" to anyone you see, especially a stranger who may be recognized by a particular cap, hat or tee shirt they may be wearing as a humble measure of their pride. You just might make a great friend! I personally believe that each and every day should be Veterans' Day.

Our fine, salt of the earth folks, gave willingly years of their lives doing jobs that many wouldn't or couldn't do, for all and our great nation, the United States of America. Conscription into military service, ended in 1973, but did not deter our men and women who realized we all are a part of something greater than themselves, from volunteering to sacrifice. Protecting and serving our nation is forever. As long as man has inhabited our planet earth there will always be chaos both natural and man-made, thus our military is on call 24/7 to defend and/or rescue both fellow patriots and civilians from foul forces.

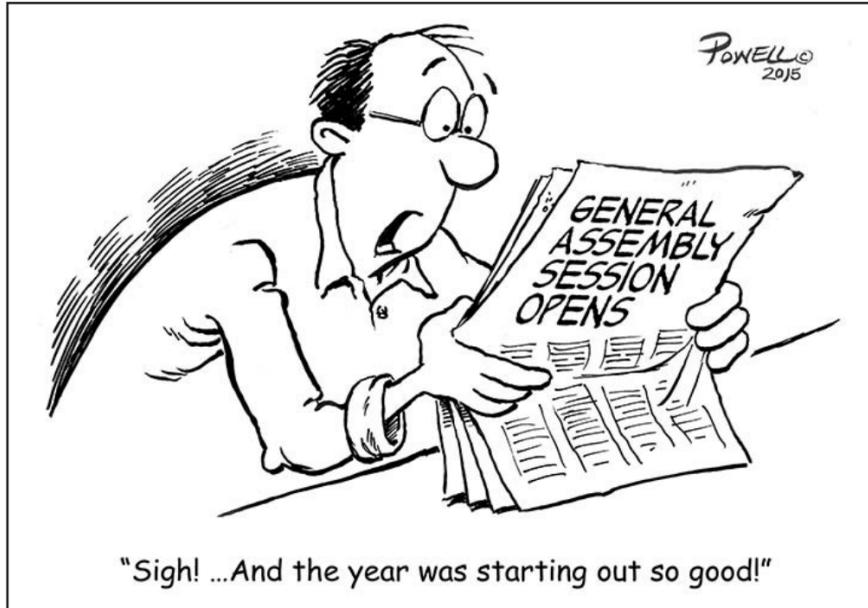
Our WWII vets, my mentors as I grew into a young man, meant the world to me. However the ones left here with us are dwindling as time speeds on, and for anyone who's never spent time with any of them, it'd be time well

spent, educational and blessed. We've got a few, here, including three Iwo Jima vets, fine, funny, knowledgeable, wonderful guys.

In Towns County, we have our Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Marine Corps League, plus other ancillary groups for Veteran events and fellowship. Blessed we were last Veterans' Day November 11, 2014, seeing so many gathering at our Veterans' Memorial Park, not only for Veterans' Day, but celebrating the 30th Anniversary of said park, made possible by Bill Kendall and his contingent of Towns County citizens and students three decades ago.

Our park continues via a committee of veterans, from five branches of our services striving to continue inscriptions of fellow servicemen's and women's names of Towns County residence who leave this earth. Did you ever think about what life would be like without those who have sacrificed so much? And, just typing this, thinking of the many I never knew, who never came home, my eyes tear up. Those who gave or have given it all should matter no less to any of us. Those jobs, harsh, dirty, long hours, no sleep, keeping machinery running, planes flying, communications systems up, no meals and showers, missing family and loved ones, willing to give all, possibly watching brothers in uniform suffer and die are jobs that had to be done and will never cease as long as there is to be a United States of America.

Semper Paratus,
Scott Drummond



Community Calendar

American Legion Post 23 meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 4 PM at VFW Post 7807, Sunnyside Rd., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-8387 for details. We need your support!

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 1 p.m.

Towns County Republican Party meets at 6:30 PM the 4th Thursday of each month at the new Senior Center. For more info call 706-994-3919.

Democratic Party of Towns County meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 5 PM at the new Senior Center.

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 Unicoy 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.

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 old Rec Center in Hiawassee at 5:30 p.m. 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org

Bridge Players intermediate level meets at 12:30 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Rec Center.

Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse, Hiawassee. The Board meets at 4 p.m., and the Guild at 6. Call us 706-896-0932.

Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. Details can be found at www.mcug.org.

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 at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains.

Alcoholics Anonymous: 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.

Mothers of Preschoolers meets the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church at 706-745-2469.

Chattahoochee 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 3 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Jerry (828) 837-7658.

The Humane Society Mountain Shelter Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at Cadence Bank in Blairsville.

The Towns County Alzheimer's Support Group meets the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM in the Family Life Center of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church. For more info call Carol at 706-896-6407.

The Appalachian Shrine Club meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Allegheny Lodge in Blairsville. For more info call William 706-994-6177.

GMREC Garden Tours every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Shooting Creek Basket Weavers meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For more info www.shootingcreek-basketweavers.com.

Friendship Community Club meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6 PM at Clubhouse, 1625 Hwy. 76, 706-896-3637.

Goldwing Road Riders meets the 3rd Saturday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse in Hiawassee. We eat at 11 and meeting begins at 12.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meets every Wednesday evening at 7 PM at the Red Cross building on Jack Dayton Circle.

Caregiver support group meets 2nd Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m. at Brasstown Manor, located at 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-4285 for more info.

Enthused Valley Square Dance Club. Dances 2nd & 4th Fridays at Towns Co. Rec. Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch.

Brasstown Woodturners Guild meets 1st Saturday of month at 9:30 AM in HHS shop. For more info call J. C. at 706-896-5711.

Mountain Amateur Radio Club (MARC) meets 6:30 PM the 1st Monday of month at 1298 Jack Dayton Cir. (next to EMS), Hiawassee. For info call Al 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.

The Board of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce meet the second Monday of every month at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office, 1411 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris.

The Quilting Bee at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church in Family Life Center, Room 216. 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10 AM - 3 PM. Bring a sack lunch. For more information call Kathy at 706-835-6721 or Marilyn at 706-897-4367.

Mountain Coin Club meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the North Georgia Tech campus in Blairsville. Guests are welcome. For more info, call 706-379-1488.

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