

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

To the Editor:
The morality of acting on climate change
 We have two choices concerning climate change. We can believe the 97% of experts in climate science who say that climate change is real and needs immediate action, or we can believe the climate change deniers. If we believe the science and act on it, and it turns out that the science was wrong, what will happen to us then? We will have a country that is free of the dependence on foreign oil, a country that is much healthier, a country that has developed alternative energy sources with the resultant increase in jobs to support those new technologies, a country with a more vibrant economy, and a country that has stepped boldly into a clean, prosperous future. If it turns out the 97% were right, and we did not act on it, what will happen to us then? We will have a world by the end of the century that will look nothing like our present world. It will be a world about 10 degrees warmer with many severe consequences from this. There will be severe heat waves, massive crop failures, a marked increase in starvation and famine across the world, a marked increase in wildfires, floods, and storms, continued melting of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice fields with resultant sea level rises and flooding of coastal areas and cities, the melting of glaciers around the world that will leave many areas with a loss of the water supply that has supported their agriculture, the spread of more diseases and insect damage of trees due to warmer temperatures, the loss of up to 60% of the species on our earth, mass disruption of populations, severe political turmoil and a high probability of wars around the globe, and a severe loss of financial stability across the globe.

I believe that we have a moral duty to act, and to act now. If we do not act, and the scientists are right, do we want to leave this type of world to future generations? If there was even a 5% chance of this happening, would we be willing to take that chance? What greater moral duty could we have? How can we even consider leaving this type of world to our children and future generations? If the scientists are wrong, what do we really have to lose?

Vernon Dixon

Letter to the Editor:

I read with interest the gentleman's February 25 letter regarding the remaining BRMEMC board members, the essence of which letter was that they should not all be thrown out like the baby with the bath water. But the unmistakable and ultimate fact is this: all such board members, whether former or current (with the exception of those recently elected), either knew or should have known of the transgressions that led to the lawsuit; simply put, that was their job and, issues of integrity aside, they didn't do it, whereupon the general BRMEMC membership was adversely affected.

Claude Spears

Dear Editor,

With the weather wreaking havoc as of lately, and forcing the school systems to have to close down, my thoughts too are concerning of what they are going to do to make up those days.

My first opinion is to eliminate the Spring Holidays and use those instead. We never had such days back when I was in school and they could certainly benefit the make up days to where the kids will still have a scheduled release on time for their Summer vacation. Another option and thought is to do like they did as well back in my day and go half a day on Saturdays. There is no reason why they couldn't or shouldn't.

We use to sit and watch Saturday morning cartoons and a bit of American Bandstand before going home for the rest of the day. This made up for lost days and we still got out in plenty of time for the Summer and even so, back then we had three full months of summer too. Not the 2 and a half as is now days.

Much could be done and accomplished on all of this if common sense was used instead of just going by instinct. Use the Spring Holidays and go half a day on Saturdays. It is no different now than it was way back then when we had to do so.

Thank You,
 Mrs. D. Barnes



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

Q: Please comment on a news article in a paper. Last Sunday an argument broke out at a Taco Bell over whether some teenage female volleyball players were appropriately dressed. The father, 47, his 17-year-old daughter and her 15-year old volleyball teammate were ordering their food when another customer, 58, began to make comments to the girls that their volleyball uniforms were "indecent," and that it looked like they were only wearing underwear. An intense argument erupted between the father and the customer.

The father picked up a chair and threatened to hit the customer with it. The customer took a knife from his pocket and opened it. The manager called the police. Fortunately no one was injured.

A: Nobody wins here because nobody takes the high road, but let's see what we can learn.

The customer needs to understand that he must earn the right to offer words of rebuke. If his goal is to effect change he obviously went about it the wrong way. If he had inquired about the team, wished the girls success in their next game and then mentioned incidentally, with a chuckle, that maybe he ought to talk to their coach about buying their bigger uniforms next time that might have at least raised awareness without creating antagonism. The issue he seems to

be concerned about gets lost in the confrontation he creates.

The father might have defused the situation, too, by saying something like, "Yeh, those skirts are kinda short, aren't they...I'll have to talk to the coach about that." No knives; no chairs; no police report.

I would hope that, when the dust settles the customer would say to himself, "Hmm, that didn't go well. I need to learn how to be more thoughtful, and maybe re-think my job as resident conscience for the world." He might even get the father's address and send him an apology.

The father's musings might go something like this: "Honestly, I've noticed too that those uniforms are pretty skimpy. Maybe I ought to discuss that with the coach. If the girls were on a swim team they would wear swimming suits, but I probably wouldn't take them to Taco Bell without at least some kind of a wrap." This is a good opportunity for him to talk to the girls about modesty. He could also admit to them that he dropped the ball and how he would respond to the customer if he had it to do over. Then he might send the customer an apology - and tell the girls he did. His papa bear instincts overrode his good judgment. But now, long term, everybody grows.

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

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The snow keeps coming for the northeast as many of us up and down the entire east coast year for spring. Senator Inhofe recently threw a snowball on the Senate floor to demonstrate the collective "I told you so" felt by many who prefer to believe that climate change, or global warming, is a statistical hoax. Senator Inhofe cited 67 new record low temperatures experienced in the east during the most recent arctic blast.

Unfortunately the east coast is not the entire country. According to the National Climatic Data Center, nine states in the west have had winters among the top ten warmest, and overall the period from December 2014 to January 2015 was the sixth warmest on record. NOAA says that worldwide, 2014 was the warmest year on record.

"Not so fast," say the climate change skeptics. Too much of the temperature data used to compile those statistics comes from urban areas which create heat islands that grow larger and hotter as their populations grow. Climate change believers respond to this with a growing body of data which indicates that the oceans have been storing much of the excess heat produced by the greenhouse effect.

Since grammar school science we have all understood the greenhouse effect caused by certain gases that allow solar radiation to penetrate the atmosphere but prevent heat from returning by the same path. Carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels is the primary culprit in the greenhouse equation for our planet. Last year the levels of CO2 reached 400ppm, the highest level ever recorded. This dubious record was reached in April and was sustained for three months, also a new record. This year we reached 400ppm in February, and indications are that levels will continue to rise.

Climate change skeptics are quick to point out the pause in global warming that the planet overall has experienced over the last 15 years. However, sci-

tists at the National Center for Atmospheric Research have an explanation for that pause. Recent studies point to a phenomenon called the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, a pattern in the trade winds which scientists say has, in effect, allowed the oceans to absorb much of the excess heat that would otherwise be felt on land.

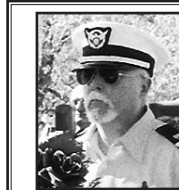
Indications are that the trade winds are starting to shift and the PDO is about to enter a new phase. We will know soon enough. If researchers are correct, the planet will begin to experience unprecedented heat events. We can all hope that they are wrong, but sooner or later the argument, for too long clouded by politics and emotion, will be decided one way or another.

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The Veterans' Corner



By
 Scott Drummond,
 USCG Veteran

Military History/ USMC Memorials

Just as we all stand to recognize and honor the 70th anniversary of Iwo Jima, February 19th, we should honor all our men and women who strived valiantly in order to restore peace from the aggression of Japanese forces, with a coalition of every branch of our military involved. Who do we most often recognize? Why, of course, the "Few, the Proud", our USMC. These "can do" young Marines are typically the tip of the spear, as in Iwo Jima. God Bless our Marines, for where would we be without them? Few may realize they must be big hearted to undergo the self-sacrifice, always for others they volunteer, knowing they will typically go into harm's way, and some will never return.

Veterans' Memorials, monuments to preserve history and to perpetually honor our Veterans of all our armed services are amongst the most honored sites in America. None are more outstanding or as instantly recognized as our Iwo Jima or USMC War Memorial at the entrance of Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA. The statue depicts our six servicemen who raised our second, much larger flag at Mount Suribachi on February 23, 1945. Unveiled 10, November, 1954 and designed by Horace W. Pealee and Felix de Weldon. On the black polished granite base are these two unforgettable inscriptions: West side: "Uncommon Valor Was A Common Virtue" - "Semper Fidelis"

East side: "In Honor And Memory Of The Men Of The United States Marine Corps Who Have Given Their Lives

To Their Country Since 10 November 1775" We are honored to have USMC Veterans of all ages, here in Towns County and indeed scattered all over our mountain region. We owe them all respect and honor, and most all of them I have met are huge hearted generous, happy, great guys.

A lesser known, more recent monument is the USMC Memorial Monument at the intersection of Highway 6 and 40 in Golden, CO. This starkly simple and beautiful monument is to honor all Marines and FMF Corpsmen and women. A life-long dream of SSgt Cyrus "Bo" Bowers, a veteran of World War II and Korea, to honor the special breed of those who have and do serve with our US Marines. No disagreement whatsoever from me.

Ground was broken on September 13, 1975. A 100 year time capsule was deposited in the base of the Memorial on December 23, 1976. The capsule contents commemorate the United States Bicentennial, the State of Colorado Centennial and the 201st birthday of the United States Marine Corps. The Memorial was completed and officially dedicated to all Marines, living and dead, on August 24, 1977, by then Commandant of the Corps Gen. Louis H. Wilson, Jr.

In my humble opinion, we need one USMC Monument in every state of our USA. As much as we Coast Guardsmen and fellow US Navy sailors squabbled with our brothers in the USMC many years ago, and perhaps still do today, we were like brothers and their inevitable scraps. Semper Fidelis to all my USMC brothers and sisters.



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!
VFW Fish Fry April - October on 2nd & 4th Fridays each month from 4:30 - 7. \$10 per plate.
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 Tuesday 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.
Stevens Lodge #414 F & AM meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in Young Harris. Sat. morning breakfast 2nd Sat. of each month from 8 - 10:30 AM. \$6 adults, \$3 12 & under.
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.
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 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.
Golding 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.
Enchanted 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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