

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Like many Towns County residents I subscribe to the philosophy that "a government that governs the least, governs the best". Unfortunately, governments are often forced to enact laws due to the behavior of just a few irresponsible people. Some people who live close to us acquired some hounds and put them in a kennel close to their house. Recently his wife had enough of the constant barking so he moved the kennel away from his house to the edge of his property that adjoins us. This solved their noise problem, but now the barking dogs are a constant annoyance to us. The peacefulness that we have enjoyed while living here the past 17 years has been destroyed.

We recently bumped into the dog owner's wife at the grocery store and she asked how we could tolerate that incessant barking? The next day I visited the dog owner at his business and he told me that there was no Noise Law in this county so there was nothing I could do about it. I don't expect Commissioner Kendall to enact a law to address one irresponsible dog owner. However, if this type of problem is more widespread than he is aware of, people should contact him and voice their concerns. This is the only way that the quiet peacefulness of this county will be preserved.

Don Holliston

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
By Don Jacobsen

Q: I am a divorced single mom with two small children. I read your articles regularly and they are helpful. But one thing I have noticed is that you often talk about dad and mom as though that described all of us. It seems you often overlook the fact that there are nearly as many single-parent families as there are married couples who are parents.

A: You're right, and I thank you for calling it to my attention. We talk occasionally in this column about the disadvantages that being raised by a single parent can create for kids. But today let me speak to the moms and dads, single for whatever reason.

I want you to know my perspective as I offer some suggestions. I grew up in a single-parent home till I entered my teens. My mom walked a mile and a half each way to J C Penny's 5-days a week, rain, shine, or snow. I know something of the price she paid. Later I married, and when our boys were 12 and 15 my wife was killed in an automobile accident and I became a single parent. That gives me some feel for the situation we're discussing. So, some suggestions if I may:

1. Remember that God loves you, no matter the circumstances, what others say, or what you feel you'd

like to do over; His love for you is unchanging. You are of infinite worth in God's sight.

2. Be intentional and creative about building happy memories with your kids. Careful scheduling that includes an occasional trip to the park, a hobby you can do together, times when you just snuggle or perhaps read to each other, for instance.

3. Make sure you have a life outside of your kids. Trade babysitters occasionally and permit yourself the luxury of a leisurely walk or an evening with friends. Oh, and the friends - pick them carefully. The last thing you need is to be around people who are stuck on "ain't it awful?"

4. Don't indulge in guilt over the things you wish you were doing better. Your kids will get their security from the love you show them and the faith and resilience they see in you.

5. And if, down-wind of the separation from your spouse there are strong feelings, always take the high road when his/her name comes up. Help your kids think the best. It will serve them better in the long run than hearing you rehearse your version of why the marriage didn't work.

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

Making Things Happen For Rural America Is What We Do

This week's Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D News is brought to you from Boise, Idaho where I have been attending the "Fire Adaptive Communities (FAC) Learning Network Pilot Project Kick-off meeting". The FAC organization is made up of eight regional hubs in the United States whose mission is to develop and implement the FAC program and spread it across the land. I was chosen to be one of the eight nationwide representatives and the Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council will operate as the Southeastern hub for the program. We were asked to include a working partner who will help with the development and implementation of the program. Eric Mosley, the state Wildfire Mitigation Specialist for the Georgia Forestry Commission was my choice and attended the Boise meeting. The Fire Wise program that we have developed in Towns County is the leading Fire Wise Communities program in the state with 6 certified communities and earned for us the opportunity to be a part of this elite eight pilot program. FAC encompasses Fire Wise, Ready-Set-Go and other Fire education programs. Fire Adapted Communities are communities with people, structures and landscaping that are prepared to withstand the effects of wildfires. A Fire Adapted Community is one where "the population understands the threat posed by wildfires and takes the personal actions necessary to help minimize the risk. Ideally a Fire Adaptive Community is one that can stand on its own, with no intervention from the fire service, against a wildfire. Achieving Fire Adapted Communities is an approach that concentrates on plans and activities that reduce risk before a wildfire occurs. A Fire Adapted Community has a combination or mixture of similar characteristics some of which are listed below:

The community exists within or adjacent to a fire-prone ecosystem and has a defined geographic boundary. Residents possess the knowledge, skills, and willingness to properly prepare their homes before a wildfire threatens, prepare to evacuate, and safely evacuate when necessary. Local fire suppression forces have the adequate skills, equipment and capacity to manage wildfire. Residents and the local fire agencies have met and understand the local fire suppression capability and related fire response expectations. Landowners are aware of fuels threats on their property and have taken action to mitigate the danger. Structures and landscaping are designed, constructed, retrofitted, and maintained in a manner that is ignition resistant. A community wildfire protection plan is developed and implemented. The community has embraced the need for defensible space by creating fuel reduction zones and internal safety zones, where treatments have been properly spaced, sequenced, and maintained over the long term.

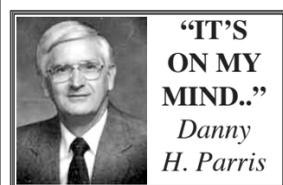
Local government has effective land use planning and regulation, including building codes and local ordinances. Property owners have an understanding of their responsibilities before, during and after a fire.

Public expectations are realistic and not based on reliance of government to provide all answers. Individuals accept personal responsibility for their property. The public understands that fire authorities cannot provide protection for every structure affected during a wildfire; and understands that it is dangerous for firefighters to attempt to protect a structure where owners have not taken the appropriate measures to make it defensible. A community that achieves the FAC designation gives it's residents satisfaction in knowing that when wildfire threatens they are prepared to survive.

Frank M. Riley, Jr, CF is Executive Director - Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council. For more information on FAC and Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council, visit our web site www.chestchatrcd.org - Phone 706-894-1591 email susan.ccrd@gmail.com.



Executive Director of RC&D
Frank Riley



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

Death and taxes

Well, the time has come and gone - that is Income Tax time. Someone long ago said "only two things are certain - death and taxes." Indeed, the Bible declares that "it is appointed unto man once to die.." (Heb. 9:27). The statistics for death is one out of one. The government also declared that April 15 is the appointed day for taxes. At least we know the date for taxes. In fact, we ought to be grateful that our income has been large enough to tax. However, I am sure that some of us identify with Cecil. Read Cecil's lament:

Dear Sir:

In reply to your request to send a check, I wish to inform you that the present condition of my bank account makes it almost impossible. My shattered financial condition is due to Federal Laws, State Laws, Country Laws, Brother-in-laws, Sister-in-laws, and Outlaws.

Through these laws I am compelled to pay a business tax, amusement tax, head tax, school tax, gas tax, light tax, water tax, an excise tax, sales tax, income tax, food tax, and furniture tax. I am required to get a business license, car license, operator's license, truck license, fishing license, hunting license - not to mention a marriage license and a dog license.

I am also required to contribute to every society and organization which the

genius of man is capable of bringing to life: to welfare relief, the unemployed relief, and the gold diggers relief. Also to every hospital and charitable institution in the city, including the Salvation Army, Community Chest, Red Cross, Purple Cross, Double Cross, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. as well as Way Stations for Wayward Girls and Boys Ranch and Boys Town.

For my own safety I am required to carry health insurance, life insurance, fire insurance, property insurance, liability insurance, earthquake insurance, tornado insurance, unemployment insurance, and old age insurance.

My business is so governed that it is no easy matter to find out who owns it. I am inspected, expected, suspected, disrespected, rejected, dejected, examined, reexamined, informed, required, summoned, fined, commanded, and compelled, until I provide an inexhaustible supply of money for every known need, desire, or hope of the human race.

Simply because I refuse to donate to something or other, I am boycotted, talked about, lied about, held up, held down and robbed until I am almost ruined.

I can honestly tell you that except for a miracle that happened I could not enclose this check. The wolf that comes to many doors nowadays just had pups in my kitchen. I sold them and here is the money.

Respectfully,

Cecil

Aren't you glad that God supplies all of our needs (even taxes) according to His riches in glory (Phil 4:19)?

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"Gee, I thought the government was already privatized. You mean those guys are working for us?"



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.

Elected Officials

Governor Nathan Deal, Georgia State Capitol Atlanta, GA 30334, 404-656-1776
Sen. Johnny Isakson, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-3643
Sen. Saxby Chambliss, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-3521
U.S. Congressman Doug Collins, 9th District, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-9893
Rep. Stephen Allison, Georgia House of Representatives, 404-656-0177 or 0185
Sen. John Wilkinson, Georgia State Senate, 404-463-5257
Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall, 706-896-2276
Clerk of Superior Court Cecil Dye, 706-896-2130
Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers, 706-896-2267
Magistrate/Probate Judge David Rogers, 706-896-3467
Sheriff Chris Clinton, 706-896-4444
Coroner Tashina Eller, 706-896-6254
Enotah Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley, 706-896-6489
Board of Education: 706-896-2279, Michael Anderson, Donna Hedden, Jerry Taylor, Bob Gibby, Emily Phillips. Superintendent: Melissa Williams
Hiawassee Mayor Barbara Mathis, 706-896-2202
Hiawassee City Council: Janet Allen, Jay Chastain, Joan Crothers, Steven Smith, Pat Smith
Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby, 706-379-3171
Young Harris City Council: Terry Ingram, John Kelley, Donald Keys, Matthew Miller, Stuart Miller, David Sellers

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