

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

From the Desk of:



Youth Homes fundraiser

As we prepare to host the 7th annual fundraiser for the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes I thought it would be good to talk a bit about what the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes are and how they came about. The purpose of the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes is, in the words of the Sheriffs' Association, "to give our state's most at-risk children the love, safety, and structure needed to become mature, successful adults."

The Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes grew out of a concern that the sheriffs of Georgia have for abused and neglected children. During the 1950s the sheriffs noticed that this was a growing problem across the state and began to consider ways to make a difference in the lives of these children who, through no fault of their own, had become victims of abuse and neglect. The sheriffs considered this project vital for these children and for our state.

In 1960 Georgia's Sheriffs were able to open the first Georgia Sheriffs' Boys Ranch near Hahira, GA. The Boys Ranch provided children an opportunity to learn "strong moral values, religious awareness, personal responsibility, teamwork and acceptance of authority, as well as how to overcome adversity" (Georgia Sheriffs'). This first campus was only the start of a vision that would continue to grow.

Today there are four additional campuses that provide a nurturing atmosphere for boys and girls placed strategically across the state.

I believe that the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes provides for children to succeed. I believe that children deserve to be given a chance to become productive, successful, law abiding citizens. To me, the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes is providing these children the opportunities that our nation's founders dreamed would be available to all children. Children in the Youth Homes learn that they are able to overcome their difficulties and, that if they work for it, they can obtain a better life for themselves. I think that our children deserve to be given a chance to succeed. This is why I continue to support the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

On Friday, June 12, 2015 the Chatuge Gun Club and I will be hosting our 7th annual fundraiser. There will be trap and turkey shoot competitions, as well as food, raffles, and door prizes. All the proceeds go directly to benefit the children of the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes and because the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes is a public charity, any donation to the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes qualifies for the highest tax deduction allowed by law.

You do not have to participate in the trap, or turkey shoots to participate in the other events of the day. Please come out and join us as we have a great time and raise money for a great cause. If you would like to participate in the trap shoot as an individual or as part of a team, or would like to sponsor an individual or a team, please contact Captain James Baldwin at the Sheriff's Office at 706-896-4444.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

About 5500 miles away from the peaceful valleys of Towns County, GA, there is a nightmarish corner of Accra, Ghana called Agbogbloshie. It is known by the locals as "Sodom and Gomorrah." Plumes of toxic smoke rise from the blackened ground as scavengers, mostly young and very poor, set fire to piles of rubbish to burn away the plastic and rubber surrounding copper wire and other metals that can be salvaged from electronics. Children as young as seven pick through the charred refuse with their bare hands, often wearing flip flops. For an average of \$2.50 per day, many endure respiratory problems, nausea, headaches, cancer and other illnesses. This is where many of our old computers go to die.

In the center of the northern Pacific Ocean there is an area about the size of Texas known as the "Great Pacific Garbage Patch" or the "Pacific Trash Vortex." The EPA estimates that the primary source of the garbage, mostly plastic and decomposed plastic, is littering and illegal dumping. Debris from ports, harbors and docks and garbage washed into rivers from storm drains gradually and inexorably makes its way into the ocean where it, and the array of chemicals in plastics that are inimical to human life, becomes part of the food chain. A similar garbage patch can be found in the North Atlantic.

Volumes can be and have been written about the problem of pollution in its many forms. Some of the most dangerous forms are invisible in the air we breathe and the water we drink. But the problems we can see, and the problems that we might think are the easiest to solve, can be the most frustrating for that very reason, and I am writing this today out of frustration.

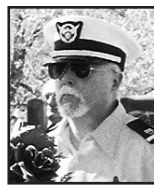
My purpose is not to berate the readers of this column who, I truly believe would be the least likely to thoughtlessly throw a fast food cup out the window, or a plastic water bottle or a beer can. I was beginning to think that some beer drinkers were navigationally challenged and needed a trail of blue cans like bread crumbs to mark the path between the beer cooler and the recliner. The number of blue cans would suggest that, either there is a lot more drinking and driving going on than I thought, or some few beer drinkers are working overtime spreading aluminum from Helen to Hiawassee and

from Blairsville to Clayton. Then I began to notice that the trail of blue rudeness extends across the entire Southeast. Only recently did I read that a certain beer is the most popular beer in America.

It is also not my intention to criticize local government, which, along with a number of neighborhood organizations regularly facilitates the roadside pickup of what we thoughtlessly throw away. We don't need to throw new laws at the problem either. Littering fines are clearly posted all over the state. Garbage we haul to the dump must, by law, be covered. This is a reasonable law, but it does not redress the amount of roadside garbage that can be found far from any designated dump.

The problem, I fear, runs much deeper than any amount of outrage or any number of new laws can address. Too many of us in our society have lost touch with the causal link between consequence and choice. We do not know the true cost of things. We expect instant gratification and disposable convenience. We expect that the virtual world of high definition beauty, celebrity and fantasy that is always at our fingertips should also extend to the physical world. If we can delete inconvenience and ugliness with a click or a swipe, why won't the fast food box full of chicken bones disappear as easily? So out the window it goes.

Agbogbloshie and the North Pacific Vortex are far away, out of sight and out of mind. The garbage right beneath our feet sails by at 60 mph, largely unnoticed. I wonder how much it has to pile up, how close it has to get, before we do notice.



The Veterans' Corner

By Scott Drummond, USCG Veteran

Military History: Who was "Kilroy"?

In the effort to keep history alive, especially for those who may have never known our WWII heroes, the once well known little fellow, "Kilroy" was painted, inscribed, drawn upon all manner of military equipment, airplanes, bombs, jeeps, armament, trucks, and buildings. In order to assist those who may not have seen this lovable little character please Google "Kilroy Was Here".

Somewhat of a mystery, Kilroy has been dated as early as 1937; however some association with early British and Australian Allies of WWII are permanently linked to his likeness. A simple cartoon like character, or perhaps a doodle, Kilroy has been attributed to American forces, as Kilroy began appearing all over Europe with the advance of our American heroes. Kilroy was simply a little almost bald head, eyes, a large nose and his fingers of both hands drawn above a straight line representing a wall or obstruction, with those fingers pulling him up and the words, "Kilroy was here". I distinctly remember him as a child and frequently drawing him on my paperwork and books in school. I loved him.

As time, effort and much sacrifice progressed, Kilroy began appearing everywhere our beloved and missed American forces were deployed. South Pacific islands were invaded by this character even carved on the side of palm trees, village huts, and especially on the back of jeeps. In today's lingo Kilroy would be called graffiti. However he was not

crude, nasty, lewd, or x-rated. Kilroy in today's lingo is "G" at the most, but meant much more to our young servicemen and women who sacrificed and helped save our civilized world. The handwritten, in chalk, paint, pen, pencil, scratched, etched or whatever method was available character represented an unbending, unbreakable bond between all of those who volunteered to save the world from oppression, worldwide. Typically, "Kilroy" was associated with our US Army, as our Army was instrumental for winning WWII and our Army men and women were all over the globe in that effort. Kilroy travelled forth with them!

Never to be outdone, Kilroy travelled with our Air Force, Navy and Marines. I'm almost sure Kilroy went with our USCG in those tough but committed and dedicated days also.

How could a silly looking doodle come to mean so much to so many? The world was at stake! There wasn't plenty to go around, as there is today, and our parents and grandparents had to make do with what they had at hand. Spirit, commitment, love, and dedication were a part, but the core segment of what the world needed to survive those dark years. Someone, perhaps an early Brit, Aussie or American, adopted Kilroy and spread his spirit of survival and desire to win worldwide. A not so silly cartoon of sorts, Kilroy could be compared to today's fist bump or high five that teammates and winners use to signify a bond, brotherhood, and commitment to the end. Kilroy is here...

Semper Paratus



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Did you read the story about the teens who were making a ruckus in the Tanehill Premier movie theater in Birmingham? Well, they seriously annoyed some of the other patrons, including a family sitting just ahead of them? The kids were so disruptive the family ahead finally got up and walked out. As they were leaving, the mom spoke to the kids but they responded disrespectfully and rudely. When the teens got home and their mom found out what they had done she was irate and told the kids they had to find the lady and apologize.

I love that story. Here is the rest of it... They didn't know who the lady was, of course, or how to contact her, but the mother and dad of the teens were determined so they decided on a plan. They wrote up a brief but personal message for social media, posted it on the Jefferson County Sheriff's Facebook page (where it received 250,000 likes) - and waited. The post said in effect: "To the family who was annoyed by the teens and left early last Sunday from the Cinderella movie, please message me, my daughter wants to apologize. I can assure you that these girls are being strongly dealt with and appropriately punished. This

rude, disrespectful, and awful behavior is unacceptable and they owe you an apology. My husband and I are having them write your apology letter tonight and we would like to pay for your next movie and snacks out of their allowance."

Remarkably, two days later the lady responded. She gave some more details to the story, "My husband had been laid off at work but since we had already planned this family outing we decided we would go anyway, although this would be the last movie we would be able to take our daughter to for a while. That's why the whole thing was so painful for us. Thank you for the apology."

The whole event cost the teens about \$60, but it may have been one of the best investments in growing up they ever made.

We work on the issue of "respect" a lot in this column. This mom and dad got it. Their teens do too, now. More than a quarter of a million people read their story. Furthermore, remember the dad who had just been laid off...through the Facebook post he got several job offers.

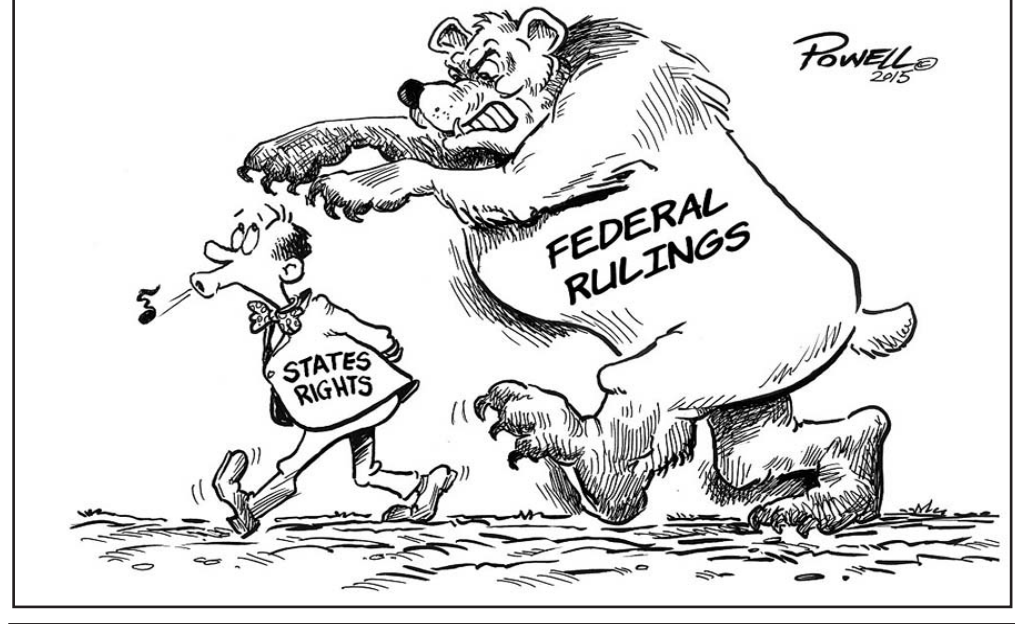
Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net.

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.



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. For info contact Bill Jones at 706-851-0318.
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. 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 Hia-

wassee 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.
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.
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 PM at the Shrine Club, Industrial Blvd., Blairsville.
GMREC Garden Tours every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Shooting Creek Basket Weavers meets 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For

more info www.shootingcreekbasketweavers.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.
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 meets 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.
Monday morning BINGO at Brasstown Manor every Monday morning at 9:30 a.m. 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Players meet in the Bradford. Questions 706-896-4285.

Towns County Herald

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