

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

**Dear Editor,**  
We are extremely disappointed that the Towns County Herald chose to run a front page story regarding a baseless lawsuit filed against Young Harris College. The article, which ran for more than 40 inches, contained more falsehoods than I can begin to refute in this letter. Additionally, the paper never once contacted the College for a statement. As a good corporate citizen of this community, we expect more from our local newspaper.

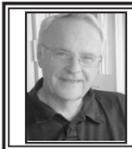
This lawsuit is the latest effort by two terminated faculty members to shake the College down for money. When we refused, they threatened individual students with a lawsuit if they did not pressure the College into paying up. Now, in another attempt to have us cave in and pay, they have tried to vilify us in any media outlet that will listen. The College will not be extorted, and we look forward to defending ourselves in the appropriate forum of the courts.

Young Harris College does not condone hazing in any form. When a report of such activity was made more than a year ago, the College took immediate and proper action against it. The student who reported the incident re-enrolled at YHC and has been here all year long with no reported complaints about the College or her fellow students. It should also be noted that the student's initial complaint bears no resemblance to the outrageous activities recited in this lawsuit.

Young Harris College is always available to the Towns County Herald when it finds newsworthy matters to print about the College. We find it irresponsible to print the outrageous claims of a lawsuit, clearly designed to damage the College's reputation, without giving us the courtesy of providing the counterbalancing facts and information. As the College was not approached for our official statement, we have included it in full below.

"Hazing is an activity that goes against the values on which Young Harris College was founded more than 125 years ago, and it is not tolerated here - at any level. More than a year ago, we suspended the sorority mentioned in this lawsuit for violating the school's no-hazing policy, and the student now complaining and her family told us then that they were satisfied with our actions. This lawsuit contains false, sensational allegations on multiple fronts, all of which are far removed from the everyday reality we live on our campus. We look forward to addressing all these matters in the proper forum, which is the courts."

Sincerely,  
Jay Stroman  
Vice President for Advancement



## RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Alex and Breigh (pronounced bree), fifth graders from Peckville, Pennsylvania, have been closest friends since they were in first grade. Recently Breigh was diagnosed with pansclerotic morphea, a very rare disease (fewer than a half dozen cases are known in the US) that attacks the skin causing excruciating pain and ulceration.

Alex was crushed as she watched her friend suffer. The condition was diagnosed but the treatment turned out to be slow, painful, and expensive. Alex decided that she could do more than just watch so she organized a bake sale to generate some cash. Anybody who had ever even baked a waffle was pressed into service. When the money was counted at the end of the day the sale had raised \$4,000 for her friend's treatments.

When Breigh's parents were forced to leave their jobs and rent an apartment in a nearby city to be with their daughter at the hospital, Alex set her sights on another project - to help cover the rent. Hundreds turned up for the bike-athon Alex organized (remember, she was 11) and the proceeds totally covered the apartment rent.

Let me tell you about Matthew, 15, and Zachary, 11. The brothers had

a friend named Mike who was diagnosed with severe autism. The more they watched Mike try to survive in his limited, lonely world, the more they wanted to do something to help. "There are a bunch of special-needs kids in our school," Matthew said at dinner one evening, "and one of the things they miss the most is sports. Zachary and I are going to start an after-school sports clinic." Using their own savings to buy equipment and with their school's permission to use the gym, they launched. More than a dozen kids signed up the first week. Kids with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, were soon learning to dribble the soccer ball down the field, shoot the ball at the basket, and swing with all their might at a softball. For many of the kids, the bi-monthly sessions were the highlights of their lives.

I get stories like these all the time. They convince me that our kids can learn to be caring and giving. They can learn to look for people they can help. They can learn to live by the Golden Rule when they see those traits practiced regularly by mom and dad. Your kids are like that - I'll bet they learned it from you.

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

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

On May 5th President Barack Obama gave the commencement address to the graduating class of Ohio State University. In his address he warned the graduates to reject the voices telling them that government is a "separate, sinister entity at the root of all our problems" and that tyranny is "always lurking just around the corner."

This is reasonable advice if you trust human nature and/or trust the system of government designed to place checks and balances on that nature. Our founders understood human nature very well and they understood, two centuries ago, the dangers of allowing banks and the military to set the agenda for the nation. They warned us against much of what was written into the history books during our two centuries of warfare.

However the Founders could not, as none of us can, anticipate all of the unexpected shapes the future assumes. How could an agrarian society conceive of an industrial revolution and population explosion enabled by the availability of cheap energy via coal and oil? How could they envision, indeed, how could anyone of our own generation envision the age of information and the ascendancy of virtual reality?

What the founders did get right was this: When government interferes in the affairs of foreign nations, it makes enemies. When greed and the lust for power become institutionalized and protected by law, then government can become an enemy of the people, and not the "force for good" that Obama and the permanent ruling class have promoted.

While promoting the "force for good" image with one hand, with the other hand the Obama Administration has continued to support the rise of the coercive powers of government which greeted the new millennium. Last Wednesday night, former FBI counterterrorism agent, Tim Clemente, told CNN that all digital communications are being captured and stored by the government. Every phone call, every email and every text message are available to government, without warrant and without oversight.

During the Bush Administration the proposed "Total Information Awareness" project sought to capture and record all foreign and domestic communications. The public outcry was so intense that the project was shelved, meaning that it proceeded as planned

but under different names and out of public view.

Clemente's revelation of government eavesdropping has not generated much interest. A decade after the terrorist attacks in New York, our national consciousness has changed. Truth is out there, but in the flood of information we swim through on a daily basis, discerning fact from fiction is like trying to taste a teaspoon of flavoring poured into a river.

Apparently our culture is not overly concerned with issues of privacy. It would seem that for many of us, the most intimate details of our lives are not significant or not real until they are posted on Facebook or tweeted on Twitter. Why should we be concerned that the government is listening to our conversations when we display everything we do and say on our own?

Besides, government is a force for good, right? Government monitors us only so that it can serve our best interests. We can trust government implicitly, trust the hordes of unelected officials that survive from election to election. We can trust them because they are ultimately under our control. They work for the people we elect; the same people who recently enacted a law, signed by the President, that allows members of congress to trade stocks on inside information that they receive by virtue of their offices - information that is not available to the common voter. It is a system just dripping with trust. What could go wrong?



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

### Please pay attention

Facetiously, I have told folks that growing up so close to the barren hills and gulleys of Copperhill, Tennessee, our family was so poor we couldn't even pay attention. Of course, that is not true. Everyone can pay attention. The Bible uses the word consider 67 times. It means to be aware of, to learn thoroughly, to note accurately, to consider well, to perceive with the mind, think about, to understand fully. There are several different Greek words translated consider in the New Testament, which express these various meanings, but all of them convey the fact that you must give careful attention to, or apprehend inwardly. Still ringing in my ears are those three words repeated by my teachers over the years, "Please Pay Attention." What they meant were "you had better put on your thinking cap" and "listen up." The next words were going to be mighty important. They would probably determine your status, whether you passed or failed a test; moved up a grade or stayed in the same grade; or graduated or extended your stay. I dare say, that as graduation time nears there are some students who are wondering if they paid close enough attention to their instructors over the past year. It is easier to daydream and give attention to hobbies, girlfriends, boyfriends, music, movies, cars, sports and twenty million other things, than it is to study and prepare for finals. Not any of the preceding things are evil

in themselves but - there is a time and season for all things. We simply must pay attention to the right things in the right seasons if we get the right results. In this writer's opinion, so much that is wrong in our world goes back to this basic principle; doing the wrong things, in the wrong seasons, equals the wrong results. To all of those who are celebrating graduation I congratulate and commend you for an important milestone reached. However, let me encourage you to KEEP YOUR THINKING CAP ON! For earth's sake and heaven's sake, keep thinking properly because our world needs those who consider their ways and the ways of our world. Someone has said that you are not thinking properly if: "you are looking for your glasses when you already have them on; you think Taco Bell is a Mexican phone company; you sell your car for gas money; you sell your soul for earthly pleasures." Indeed, graduation reminds all of us that life demands a final accounting. The end of my life and your life will either reward us with an eternal promotion into a perfect place of such joyful bliss that if I were blest with ten thousand tongues they would fail of words to describe the place called heaven that God has prepared for those who love Him; sorrowfully, I must say that for those who paid no attention to the ways of life and death will only inherit a permanent place of punishment which again is beyond human description. All of this is according to God's unchangeable Word. Therefore, the Biblical writer said, "Consider (please pay attention) Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Hebrews 12:3).



"Nobody is willing to run for office anymore. They are all too busy finding things to run against."

## 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 2 p.m.  
**Towns County Democratic Party** meets the 2nd Thursday of every month at 5 PM at the Senior Center.  
**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.  
**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 Hiwassee River Valley Kennel Club** meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st Monday of each month at Brother's Restaurant in Murphy. Call Kit: 706-492-5253 or Peggy: 828-835-1082.  
**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 Senior Center in Hiawassee at 5:30 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 1182, Hiawassee, GA. We do oral family histories of residents. 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 ArtWorks Artisan Centre, Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m., meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Call us by 706-896-0932 or mtntregarts-craftsguild.org.  
**Mountain Computer User Group** meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Goolsby Center at YHC. Q & A at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.  
**FPL Retirees Breakfast** will meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Hole in the Wall Restaurant on the square in Blairsville at 9 a.m.  
**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.  
**Prostate Cancer Support Group** meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 5-6 PM in the Cancer Treatment Center Auditorium in Blairsville. For more info call Steve 706-896-1064.  
**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.  
**Georgia Mountain Writers Club** meets at St. Francis of Assisi Church the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 AM.  
**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 evenings at 7 PM at the Red Cross building (up the hill from the chamber office 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 Hiawassee Senior Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch. Call 706-379-2191.  
**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.  
**VFW Post #7807** will be hosting a fish fry they 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month April - October. \$9. all you can eat from 4:30 - 7 PM.  
**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 706-996-9614 after 6 PM.

## Towns County Herald

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