

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

On behalf of my family and our father, who is a resident at Chatuge Nursing Home, I want to praise and offer our profound thanks to the entire staff of the nursing home. Last Saturday, May 19, was Family Cook Out Day at the nursing home. What a great event for the residents and families alike. There was great food, excellent music, fun activities for the children and a beautiful day to spend with the family and friends at the nursing home. The Nursing Home staff from Mr. Kelly to the nurses, the nursing assistants, dietary staff, custodial staff, maintenance, just everyone involved at the nursing home went to great lengths to make this a special day for the residents and their families. Towns County is truly blessed to have this outstanding and caring staff taking care of our loved ones. Many thanks to Chatuge Nursing Home.

Sincerely,
Brenda Maynard & family of Barney Word

To the Editor:

Your school board is elected to make decisions for the communities they represent. When they have to make decisions that turn out to be unpopular, think about this: they usually have ALL the information and no nefarious agendas. If you don't like their decisions you can vote them out of office.

School board meetings are just that; meetings of the board, to which the public is invited -- it is not a public meeting in which the folks who are not members of the board participate. That is why there is an open session before the meeting so the board can hear the concerns of the community.

Board minutes are available for anyone to read. However, there are no minutes taken in executive, or closed, sessions which can be called for only a very limited number of issues, personnel being one. Closed sessions are for the protection and confidentiality of the subjects being discussed; not because the board has some personal agenda or vendetta. Remember, there are five of them.

The community elected this board and it is doing an outstanding job. Trust them.

Anne Mitchell



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE By Don Jacobsen

901,000,000 people worldwide have an account on Facebook making it the world's most pervasive social network. Nearly one out of every six people in the world has a Facebook account and more than half a billion people use it every day. By the time the typical American youngster graduates from high school he or she will have spent more time on Facebook than they will spend earning their bachelor's degree in college. Pretty amazing when you realize that eight years ago it didn't even exist.

But Facebook is only one digital influence our kids run into. The typical teen sends a hundred text messages every day. A majority of seven-year olds carry a cell phone. My wife and I were worshipping recently on the campus of a Christian university and the pastor invited the students to text their responses to his sermon - while he was preaching. Then the incoming messages were projected on the screen (well, some of them).

Why is that kind of information of interest to responsible parents? Let me suggest some reasons. We are in the early stages of a communication revolution that is as much a game-changer as the

development of books, radio, and television combined. You and I know that any influence as pervasive as this one is going to change everything and everyone it touches -- including our youngsters. What kind of social skills will they develop long-term if so much of their social interchange is done when they're hunkered down over a small, faceless screen? Also, in this strange new world there is no adult to overhear, to oversee, to understand the influences that shape them. Countless kids have put stuff, personal stuff, on the screen which has come back to haunt them.

And this latest communication media frenzy has given new meaning to the word "addiction." In many ways similar to drug abuse, it draws its users into an all-consuming habit, blurs their vision of reality, helps them hide behind a veil, and generates huge blocks of unproductive time.

So Dad, Mom, what are your kids doing digitally that you don't know about? Maybe it's time for a major family conversation, and some new boundaries.

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The Memorial Day which just passed is a holiday that I hope everyone remembers in particular this year. Many of us took time to remember the sacrifices made in service to our nation, but I would like to add to that reflection a memory of how we spent our time during the long weekend.

We need more holidays. Granted, from the boardroom this might be considered a contrarian opinion in the face of concerns about productivity and competitiveness, but from the freeway crammed with travelers driven to arrive at their holiday destinations as quickly as possible, from the parking lots filled with shoppers in search of holiday sale items or hot dog buns, from the long line of cars waiting to get through Helen, Georgia, more time off might seem a good idea. With relatively few holidays many of us feel pressure to "relax" harder and faster within the brief window of time away from the construction site or the cubicle.

When holidays are scarce they can become imbued with an aura of expectation and obligation. We are obligated to take the kids to visit grandma, who lives three hours away on the other side of interchanges and exit ramps. We feel obligated to gather and gorge with friends, which requires driving, parking and shopping. We expect to be able to recreate those images from the commercials of joyful friends cooking meat over a grill in some wonderful natural area, again requiring driving, shopping, and more driving.

As a brief member of the motoring mob over the weekend, I had a chance as a passenger to observe the behavior of my fellow travelers more closely than I normally do as a driver. I saw anxiety, impatience and anger in many who were working hard to position themselves to have a great holiday. I had to wonder how rested many of my fellow travelers would feel at the end of their marathons, or whether returning to the office on Tuesday would actually be a relief.

I hope that you all enjoyed the long holiday weekend, and that within the bit of extra time away from work you were able to relax, to recreate, or perhaps to just sleep late for a change. I congratulate those of you who were able to stay at home and enjoy the simple pleasure of time -- time with family and friends, time

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.

puttering in the garden, time stretched out on the sofa: time free from obligations and expectations.

Hopefully, at some time during the holiday you paused to reflect upon the lives that have been spent to purchase our ability to enjoy these freedoms. They were dearly bought, and the price continues to rise. Free time and the ability to choose what to do with it is becoming more expensive; not because of enemies overseas, enemies at home or enemies around every corner, but because of the pressures pushing us deeper into wage slavery, pushing us to work more for a dollar that buys less. Those of us who were gifted with a day off on Monday can thank Congress. Most of our meager set of holidays has been rescheduled to Mondays so that Congress can have a long weekend. Perhaps they need to rest up for the laborious task of finding ways to extract more from our labor in the ongoing search for revenue to pay for their excess.

By Memorial Day next year, it is likely that the government will be extracting more tax from our paychecks, our purchases, our dividends and our capital gains. It is likely that the deficit will be considerably higher. It is likely that the fewer dollars we have to spend during our brief holiday will buy less, which is not likely to increase our ability to relax and recreate. By the time you read this, Memorial Day 2012 will be a fading memory, but remember, if you can, the troops that will still be overseas all year long. Remember the increasing cost of the grand schemes of government and empire in terms of blood and treasure. Remember all of this on Election Day.

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

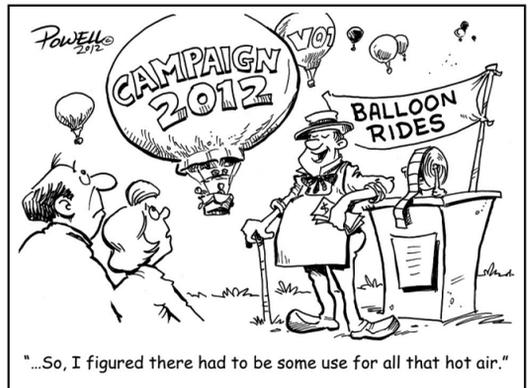
We are debtors

When we arrive in this world we are debtors. We already owe for nine months of food and shelter. We are indebted to our ancestors for the comforts and conveniences that we enjoy. They're the ones that have built hospitals where we were born; built schools where we were educated; built churches where we worship. They're the ones that have battled diseases, conquered enemies, waged war against poverty and ignorance in order to give us a better world. Dare we be ungrateful? God forbid that we would not be thankful for their sacrifices. It goes without saying that Godly, honest and hardworking people want to leave something for those who come behind them. As we graduate another generation may we be reminded that the greatest threats, problems, and challenges facing our world are not energy, ecology, government and the endangered species list. The greatest enemy facing this generation is not outer space but inner space. The greatest threats to our nation's survival have to do with the moral and ethical issues confronting us. The real dangers that can destroy us are internal and not external. They are matters of the very soul of our nation. If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do? Or put another way if the foundations

be destroyed what have the righteous been doing? Much of our world's music, entertainment and sports need to be cleaned up. We have reached an all time low with cursing, filthy language and sexual perversion. Our movie and video industries seemingly thrive on probing deeper depths of darkness to dump into our world.

As the late Vance Havner used to say, "There was a time that we blushed because we were ashamed. Now we are ashamed because we blush." It is a shame that the airways are filled with people taking God's name in vain and no one says a word. But you let someone mention God's name in a prayer to bring blessings upon our children and nation and suddenly there are twelve organizations that want to sue you in the name of "human rights." I have about come to the decision that "human rights" are for everyone but decent, law abiding, normal, taxpaying citizens. There are many leaders, movers and pushers in modern America that are bent on brain washing us into believing that every depraved, reprehensible, and sordid sin imaginable should be tolerated and accepted as normal. God has already burned down Sodom and Gomorrah once and we have people who are attempting to restore and rebuild it. Graduates remember as Paul said, We are debtors both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise" (Romans 1:14).

We, like Paul need to proclaim the gospel to our generation in order to bring about change. Selah!



Community Calendar

American Legion Post 23 meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30 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 7 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. Please call Kim Bailey at 706-994-2727 or 706-896-6747 for details.
Towns County Republican Party meets at 6: 30 PM the 2nd Thursday of each month at Daniels Steak House. For more info call 706-379-1371.
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.
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 on Hwy 64 in Murphy, NC. Call President Kit Miracle: 706-492-5253 or Peggy Moorman: 828-835-1082.
The Unicorn 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.
Board of Voter Registrars meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m., Courthouse.
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 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org
Bridge Players intermediate level meets at 12:45 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Recreation Dept.
Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, located at 308 Big Sky Drive (behind the Holiday Inn), Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m. & the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Contact us by calling 706-896-0932, mtnregartscraftsguild.org, mtnregartscraftsguild@hotmail.com.
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 Quinlan at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridge-mountains.
Alcoholics Anonymous: 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.
Mothers of Preschoolers meets on the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church office at 706-745-2469 for more information.
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 6 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Lee (828) 389-0924.
We do Family Oral History of all of our residents. If you have not had your family history recorded and would like to do so, please call the Towns County Historical Society at 706-896-1060.
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.
GMREC Native Plant Garden Tours: Mondays 9 AM-1 PM. May-Sept. (except holidays). 706-745-2655.
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. Caregivers or family members of those with dementia are encouraged to attend. For further information, 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.
VFW Post 7807 will have their all you can eat fish fry on the 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month from 4:30 to 7 PM. \$9 a plate. See you there!
GMREC Garden Tours every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Shooting Creek Basketweavers meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. All welcome. For more info www.shootingcreekbasketweavers.com.

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