

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor

The scandal at BRMEMC involving a board member, who had not paid a bill in over two years amounting to over \$48,000 is small compared to the big scandal of the board itself. A select committee selected, not elected, is named to select a person to serve as a board member. That person must be a good-ole-boy who is mild natured and won't cause any controversy or ask hard questions at meetings, selected to serve as pawns to the manager at BRMEMC.

The former manager convinced his pawns to spend \$20+ million of our money despite the recession, while many were struggling to pay a \$100 power bill. They purchased the highest property they could find, adjacent to Brasstown Valley Resort, spent millions on excavation and built a facility to flaunt in our faces. Then they left a ten foot high bank, constructed expensive rock columns as fence posts, used decorative fencing and spent untold thousands on landscaping.

Apparently the board could care less about future costs to maintain the grounds or squander electricity on elaborate high ceilings in fancy offices. The final cost is yet to be determined, the former manager had 105 employees, but due to this recession, needed probably less than 50. He was spending millions running cable for TV and Internet access. Once he got all this approved by his pawns, he conveniently decided to retire, leaving someone else to do the work. The board is ultimately responsible to the customers, we who pay the bill. The board should have known about an overdue bill exceeding \$48,000. An audit should clearly show all overdue bills.

This is just another example of officials at all levels not paying any attention to the ones who pay. It seems everyone is good at spending someone else's money. If the BRMEMC board had \$20+ million to spend, why didn't they reduce costs during this recession or give a meager hourly increase to the hard working men and women, instead of a big lavish shrine for themselves?

Ladies and gentleman, the scandal at our BRMEMC continues while we are kept in the dark to simply pay the piper.

Tommy Moore

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter in appreciation for the work of the Towns County EMS and the Life-Flight helicopter crew. I had a very severe anaphylactic shock episode on the night of July 3. They were at our residence very quickly and assessed my situation. I was taken by ambulance to a nearby area and life-flighted to Grady Hospital in Atlanta, and there I spent two days in ICU. I have been home since July 5th and everything seems to be in order. My wife has spoken to me many times since that night about how quickly the EMS team responded and how professional all the team members were and how they worked to save my life.

I would also like to explain the importance of keeping certain ticks off and more importantly keeping them from biting. The doctor that is treating me states that I have developed an allergy to any type of red meat, all stemming from that bite of the Lone-Star tick.

Thank you,
Chris Shirley



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

A 16-year old girl, pregnant by her 16-year old boyfriend, is being pressured by her parents to have an abortion rather than carry the baby to term. You may have read the story. There is no good answer to this complicated family predicament.

The girl's parents are mortified that she has created a media circus in their small Texas town. They subsequently forced her to quit school, get two jobs to pay for medical expenses, and schedule an appointment at an abortion clinic.

The pregnant teen then sued her parents in Texas Family Court charging that they are violating her constitutional rights. The teen's father told the court that because she is a minor the decision is not hers but is rather up to her parents and they are demanding that she proceed with the abortion.

All of us cringe at the difficult prospect of "children having children," and most of us are all too familiar with the dysfunctional families that often grow out of these kinds of circumstances. What chance does the baby have in this setting? The 16-year old father has a responsibility here, but the likelihood of his being able to get a job with sufficient income to care for his family when he has

limited education is not great. There is no good answer.

Here are some issues they need to talk through: There have been some life-altering decisions made that cannot be un-made. The happily-ever-after stuff that most little girls dream of are going to be extremely difficult to achieve. The new mom, not yet a young adult, will be handling responsibilities and decisions that are way beyond her maturity level.

The Texas court sided with the pregnant teen that she could not be forced to have an abortion. I agree with the court. The girl carries in her womb a new life who is not party to the mistakes that have been made. The baby should not be killed for someone else's bad choices.

As painful as it will be, here is an opportunity for the girl's parents to show their mettle. Let them gather together a support group - maybe a church group - that can provide what the new mom needs but doesn't have. They can give her an accelerated course in Mothering 101. She becomes their mission field. Long road ahead, but with love and forgiveness a joyous journey is still a possibility.

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

Prepare for wildfire season!

I may sound like a broken record talking about the dangers of wildfires all of the time and most of us think we are OK since those things only happen out West, but one day one will happen where we live and we all need to be prepared for it when it does show up. Even if it is not when we are around, we can prepare our property for the next generation so they will be safe during a wildfire event. Prepare for a wildfire and pass it on to your children and grandchildren so they can enjoy and protect what we have worked hard to build and help it survive for a long time.

Take a look at the news from our western states to see just how bad the fire season is. We have a lot of our state and federal firefighters on details out west helping out with the many fires that are burning now, but they can be recalled quickly if we have a problem here. Firefighters can't always protect every home from wildfire - especially if you haven't done your part to prepare.

You can take important steps around your home to make it safer for you, your family, and your neighbors. Start now by setting an example and helping create Fire Adapted Communities before the next fire approaches!

Here are some suggestions to help protect your property and keep you safe from wildfire. 1. Talk to your local fire department about how to prepare for a wildfire, situational awareness before a fire, when to evacuate, and what you and your community should expect during a response 2. Use the Wildfire Home Assessment & Checklist to conduct a risk assessment on your property. Create a plan to address issues in your property's Home Ignition Zone/ Defensible Space, including: maintaining a "fire-free" area around the perimeter of your home; managing vegetation along fences; clearing debris from decks and patios, eaves, and porches; selecting proper landscaping and plants; knowing the local ecology and fire history; moving radiant heat sources away from the home (i.e., wood piles, fuel tanks, sheds); thinning trees and ladder fuels around the home; develop a personal and family preparedness plan; support land management agencies by learning about wildfire risk reduction efforts, such as using prescribed fire to manage local landscapes; if you have a homeowner association, work with them to identify regulations that incorporate

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.

Executive Director of RC&D

Frank Riley



proven preparedness landscaping, home design, and building material use, such as Firewise.

We tend to think that Wildfires happen somewhere else, but they do happen around here and can happen in your neighborhood. These fires may not be as big as the ones that happen in California, but to the people who lose their homes they are just as devastating. Wildfire can happen to you or me so we all need to take time to make plans for what to do when the flames are approaching our homes and businesses... Be Fire Wise!

For more information on Firewise and the Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council, visit our web site www.chestatrec.org; phone 706- 894-1591; email susan.crcrd@gmail.com.

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

Marriage

Marriage has fallen upon hard times. Too many couples just want a trial run without any commitment. That is the world's way and the majority of these relationships end in disaster. I believe that God has given the ideal relationship in marriage - one man, one woman for life. It is built upon the principles of Genesis 2:24 of leave, cleave and weave. Man is to leave father and mother and cleave to his wife. They are to weave a life together. Marriage is to be a blending of two lives into one.

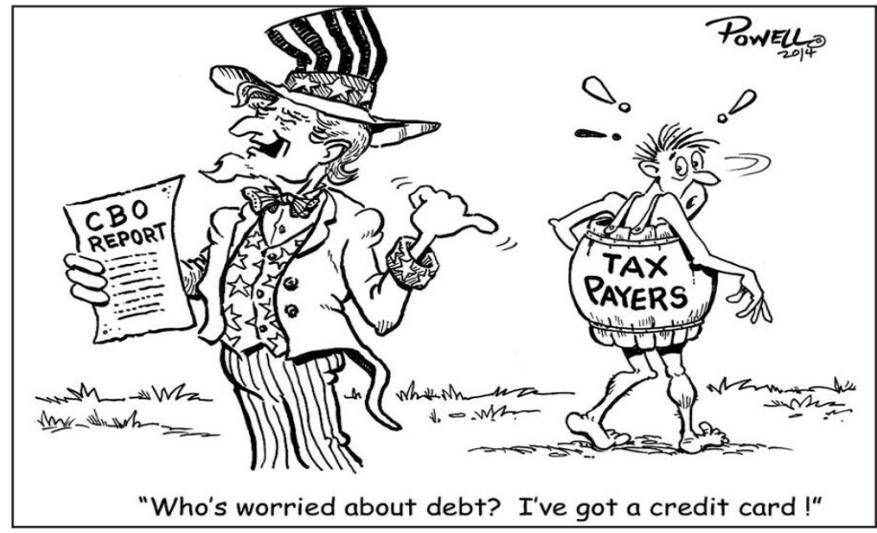
The problem with most marriages today is a lack of weaving or blending together. Men and women are totally different. They think differently, look differently and act differently. Regina and I married very young. I had a black 1952 customized Ford with fender skirts, lowering blocks, spacers in front, twin glass packs and on my days off I spent more time working and cleaning my car than I spent with my wife. She became jealous of my car. I had to convince her that I loved her more than my Ford. Regina is strange. She is neat and wants to clean up everything. If I get up at night to make a bathroom visit she may make the bed before I get back. I get a spoon to stir my coffee and when I return to get a second cup I have to get another spoon. The first one is already in the dishwasher. We go on a vacation and before she leaves the motel she wants to clean the bathroom and make the bed. I knew I was in trouble when she wanted to clean up the rice thrown as we left on our honeymoon.

I have learned a lot being married to Regina. At one time I thought a bed post was a place to hang my pants. That's

the reason God brought her into my life. I needed to have some weaving and blending. Men are simple but women are complex. When women go out they dress to make a statement. Their hair, make-up, dress, slacks, shoes, purse and jewelry are all coordinated. Men just dress so they won't be naked. The colors don't matter.

Well, back to weaving and blending. If you notice Kentucky Fried Chicken boasts that its flavor is the secret blend of several spices. In other words blending is the process whereby two or more ingredients are mixed together to produce a compatible compound. One ingredient does not stand above the other ingredients but there is a blending balance that produces a pleasing recipe. Marriage is to be a blending balance of one man, one woman where neither overpowers the other. Although, it is possible to have a marriage equally divided between male and female and not have blending together. Marriage is not just an equal portion of both male and female but a mixing and blending. Just as surely as you can have all the ingredients for a cake: sugar, flour, butter, etc., you cannot have a cake until the blending, weaving and stirring takes place. Neither can you have a marriage until there is an intermingling and blending of ideas, skills, interests and tasks.

Marriage is two people that God has brought together whose personalities work together to fulfill God's original purpose to glorify Him and enjoy each other until death shall part them. This is a life-long process of weaving, blending and mixing. If two people try to be selfish and lone rangers there can be no marriage. Regina and I do not have a perfect marriage because we are not perfect but we have and still are enjoying the blending of marriage and the weaving process through every experience of life. The truth is, as someone has said, "Success in marriage consists not only in finding the right mate, but also in being the right mate."



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 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 Thursday 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 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.

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 artguild-store.com.

Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month in Young Harris. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. A "Q & A" session follows. Details can be found at www.mcug.org.

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/blueridge-mountains.

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.

Georgia Mountain Writers Club meets at Cadence Bank 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 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.

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 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.

The Board of Directors 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.

Towns County Herald

Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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