

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,  
 I know this is a little early by far, but I wanted to give every one and especially the organizers something to consider and think about. Halloween is just around the corner. I have to admit that I do miss the old days when the kids would come to my house and I would give out candy and seeing their eyes light up and the joy that was shared were times I will treasure forever. I use to even take their pics and some times would even hide my video camera. The expressions on their face when I would tell them to look towards the video camera. PRICELESS!! Those days however are long gone and forgotten now that they have these "Halloween on the Square" things. I have to admit that I understand the protection we are all giving our kids these days and all, but still, going house to house is just as safe as well especially if you just go to those houses and businesses and people you know. In many places, they dont even know what I am talking about when I say "Halloween on the Square" because they DO STILL go house to house. My own grandkids dont even know what I am talking about when I tell them how we use to do this. My daughter remembers well and so do I. She and her Dad and Aunt and cousins would all go together and take TRASH BAGS and in one hour alone would come back, and she would dump all of her goodies out in the middle of the floor in her bedroom and then go right back out for more! I have to say there were much stuff that had to be thrown away because we had enough stuff to last for MONTHS!! I went last year and well, the kids were frozen standing out in the cold, the lines were long and you didn't know which end to start on either, people acted like they were annoyed having to go and didn't speak or talk, you just walked around and got your stuff and that was it. And many didn't give out candy but literature and other stuff.

That aint Halloween!! And several areas started earlier than specified and by the time the kids got there, many businesses and all were already putting away their candy and wouldn't offer to bring it back out either. And of course you never know what the weather will be and standing out in it, well, they at least have a warm vehicle to get in to after they go to one house, and wait to go to another. And my grandkids got only about a quarter bag full if that. It is sad in a way. I know things change, time changes and people change but we CAN still have a few traditions left if they are followed out correctly and safely. I say this year, let the kids have their time of going house to house just this once and see how it goes for them.

Just once!

Thank you for your time,  
 Mrs. D. Barnes

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

One of the advantages of an energy intensive civilization is the availability of a variety of products from around the world. One hundred years ago the only way to enjoy a papaya in the middle of winter was to travel to Central America. Today the produce of all seasons is available in our local markets just about year round.

One of the disadvantages of this global trade in fresh produce is the relative safety of the product. Produce from outside the United States is subject to contamination by agricultural chemicals that have been banned here and the use of polluted water to irrigate crops has spawned multiple outbreaks of food-borne disease. The CDC estimates that each year in the United States, 1 in 6 people, or about 48 million, get sick from contaminated food. One hundred twenty eight thousand are hospitalized and 3000 die from foodborne diseases.

The government's response to this problem includes a complicated set of procedures and paperwork producing requirements known as HARPC, or Hazard Analysis Risk-based Prevention Controls. These rules apply mainly to food processing facilities that were required to register with the FDA under the Bioterrorism Act of 2002.

While the government continues to fight e-coli with paperwork and increased government control, there is a simpler, cheaper and more effective way that we can increase food safety at home, and you probably already have the means in your medicine chest.

Most of us rinse produce from the market before cooking or serving, but a simple water rinse, while beneficial, leaves much room for improvement. To go a step further, mix one part hydrogen peroxide to nine parts water and spray, completely coating all surfaces of the produce. Scrub the produce with a vegetable scrubber and then rinse again. For fruits and vegetables too tender to scrub, soaking in a bowl of the peroxide mixture is sufficient. Peroxide fights bacteria and effectively removes much of the waxy layer of paraffin that coats much of the produce we find in grocery stores.

Some people follow the peroxide wash with a spray

or soak in a white vinegar solution, which is another cheap and effective killer of bacteria. Much information is available online on the effectiveness of both peroxide and vinegar solutions in cleaning produce.

It remains to be seen how effective paperwork, monitoring and government control will be in safeguarding the nation's food supply, but as always, the best line of defense is at the kitchen counter. Food that travels hundreds and thousands of miles is subject to a great deal of uncertainty even before it is handled again at the market by employees and customers alike. A few extra steps with inexpensive ingredients found in most households can go a long way towards keeping produce safe.

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

**Gardening woes**  
 It happens every year. When spring time rolls around I get these illusions of planting a variety of vegetable seeds and harvesting truck loads of perfect vegetables. You know, vegetables that look like the pictures on the seed packages. This year was no different. I got out the old tiller and pulverized the soil, planted beans, okra, squash, corn, peas, tomatoes, peppers, radishes and white cucumbers; I visited my garden every day looking for the first signs of broken earth to reveal life bursting forth from those seeds. Boy was I surprised and excited to see almost every seed that I placed in the ground come forth reaching up toward the sun with passion. A beautiful sight! But the rain began and several days went by before I checked out my garden. Lo and behold those beautiful plants could not be seen. Pig weeds had completely taken over my entire garden. This pig weed had gone hog wild. There were not just a few pig weed plants but I am talking government deficit numbers – trillions and trillions. I devised a plan using cardboard and placing it between my plants and the weeds and sprayed the weeds with Round-Up. However, my plan backfired. The Round-Up killed the weeds but it also

permeated the soil and killed lots of my vegetable plants. Those remaining plants survived well, but with so much rain I believe bass or catfish must have eaten a portion of the surviving plants. Two rows of white-half runner beans were really doing well, but a big buck took a craving for my beans. Blight took care of my tomatoes. Chipmunks, moles, voles, ground hog, cutting worms, bugs and unknown insects have, without my permission, freely visited my garden and satisfied their voracious appetites. My wife has been telling me for years that she doesn't believe God wants me to have a garden. She has almost convinced me. When I add up the cost of plowing, preparing the soil with fertilizers, buying the seed and planting the seed, the squash I have been eating, probably cost me about 20 or 30 dollars a piece. As a retiree, I am not financially able to employ a military expert with an arsenal of weapons to battle my vegetable enemies. To be a successful gardener you must employ an Air Force to ward off fowl that swoop down out of the sky. You need an underground Army to block the advancement of critters like moles, chipmunks and groundhogs. You need a Marine company to take care of larger enemies like raccoons, deer, etc. And with all the rain you probably need a Navy to counter act all of the water fowl and fish. Next year I may listen to my wife. The Farmer's Market seems to be my best hope for vegetables this year.

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

Although this isn't Mothers' Day I'm in full salute mode just the same. Ruthie and I are spending a couple of days with our granddaughter and her ER Doc husband and their two small children. The older is two; the younger is six months. We're talking non-stop circus here. It has renewed my respect for the role of young moms. Whew. I can understand why in God's wisdom He designed that children shall be born to the young and not to the elderly.

I am impressed with how she manages the daily routines, the non-negotiables: eat, nap, dress, bath, play, bed. We offered to help; we were tired by noon. But she still had to program in the cleaning, the laundry, cooking, grocery-shopping, and some time for self-care. It's relentless; there is no such thing as weekends off. Oh, and she plans time to stay married because, as we often talk about in this column, family is not just about kids, not even just about little kids.

I asked her to tell me about how she manages her role. How do you stay patient, and positive, and pleasant, and passionate when there is so much clamoring for your attention? She told me – balancing

the baby on her hip – that last night after the children were in bed she had sat down to text her mom but she fell asleep mid-text. So the young tire, too.

But I like what she said about managing the routine. It allows you to organize priorities and at the same time allow for the unexpected. It also helps provide stability for the kids if they know there is some pattern to the day. I love what she said about maintaining a date night every week or two to help keep the marriage from becoming marginalized in the interest of the kids. I was impressed with what she said about scheduling some personal quiet time into the day so her own spiritual journey stays vibrant. I am delighted that her church provides a "Mothers' Morning Out" once a week so she can take a walk, go to the library, go to lunch with friends, or shop.

Now it may be that your days tend to be a bit more frazzled than I've just described. If so, I hope you found some useful ideas above. It almost made me wish I still had little kids at home. Almost.

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

"I think it's high time we stopped taxing the people's income!"



"We are bound to get a lot more taxing their outgo."



## 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.

**Hiawasse 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 Hiawasse 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 Hiawasse 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.

**Fish 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.

## Towns County Herald

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