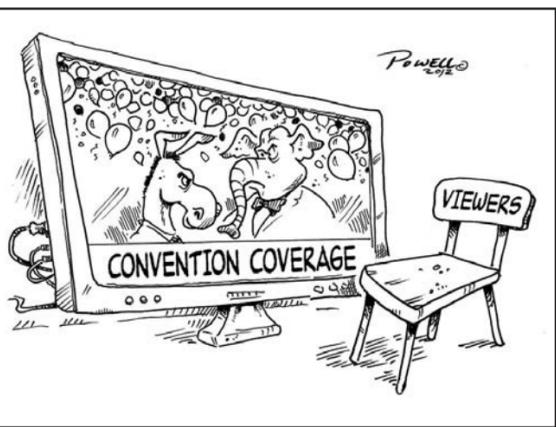


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Finding a middle path for our lives is challenging. Balancing faith and reason, career and family, work and play is not easy. However, when we seek balance in a political candidate, it can be almost impossible.

This is not to say that a kind of dynamic equilibrium cannot be found in our political system. We have a democrat for president and then a republican, a conservative house and a liberal senate – and then vice versa. It is the equilibrium of a see-saw, and the voting public never leaves the playground.

The problem is that the two major political parties present us with options in a way that is very similar to how satellite companies sell programming packages. To get the few channels that we really like, we have to pay for all the others that we never watch. If social issues are our concern we are told (by democrats) that we have to vote for a democrat. If we believe that the free market is a better steward of the economy than the government, republicans tell us we must vote for a republican. If the environment

is our biggest concern, vote for a democrat; if we worry about the right to keep and bear arms, a republican.

During the last few decades every election cycle sees the smoldering embers of the same issues fanned into flames by campaigns that realize a great truth about American politics: Americans will be more or less evenly divided on most issues, but by appealing to the fears, the passions and the prejudices of a few, the balance can be tipped in one direction or another.

If we study the history of political campaigns and compare the promises candidates make to the actions they take while in office, we will see that perspectives seem to change as soon as the oath of office is taken. Presidents have a tendency to govern from the center, no matter what they promise while campaigning. The burning issues that propelled them into office will die back down to embers. The good intentions they may have had will become diluted by another reality of American politics: The purpose of the political system is not to govern, but to be elected.



“IT’S ON MY MIND..”

Danny H. Parris

The Glenda Gooch House

It’s time for Georgia football to begin. I was born a Georgia football fan and have followed their games over the years. As a new season kicks off I am reminded of Glenda Gooch. Glenda was a passionate Georgia Bulldog fan. She and I were not only Georgia fans but we shared birthdays in the same month. I always told Glenda all “good people” were born in April and were Bulldog fans. She loved it. Glenda’s life was a short life, but she still lives in the hearts of all who knew her. She died in January, 2008 at the age of 22. My wife and I met Glenda in 1989 and found out about her heart condition. She had a heart transplant in 1993 and the Lord blessed her by extending her life for fourteen years. Although, Glenda is no longer with us her life and influence still continue to minister to others. One of the special ways through which Glenda’s life still impacts others is through “The Glenda Gooch House.” On August 22, 2012, The Glenda Gooch House celebrated four years of successful ministry. It is located across the street from Union General Hospital at 324 Walling Road and came into

being by the loving efforts of family and friends throughout the area. The house is available for use by families of patients in Union General Hospital as well as local nursing homes. This relieves families of the burden of extra expense while being near their loved ones. I am sure that many of you have experienced the stress and anxiety of looking after loved ones in hospitals located in far away cities. Trying to rest or sleep in waiting rooms is pretty difficult as is bathing or changing clothes in a public bathroom. Therefore, this house was dedicated in memory of Glenda for the express purpose to minister for our Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:40). This house provides a place to rest and relax with all the amenities of being in your own home. During its short existence 200 families have been privileged to use the hospitality house. This includes families from all over the United States, The Netherlands, Canada and Nova Scotia as well as local residents from Blue Ridge, Murphy, and Peachtree. A board of directors is responsible for its daily operation and oversees all of its maintenance. This non-profit group looks to the local community for the financial resources to maintain this free ministry to families. If you would like to help keep Glenda’s memory alive through this ministry you may do so by sending a donation to Carolyn Jarrard, P. O. Box 1535, Blairsville, GA 30514.

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

PUP is here to help YOU, now you can help US! The annual mum sale, Mums the Word, will be held on the square on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 7-8 from 9-2. Beautiful mum plants will be for sale to brighten your yard or just your front door, starting at \$5.

PUP (Prevent Unwanted Pets) is a group of dedicated Towns County citizens who raise money to help residents spay and neuter their pets or strays they are feeding. We have no paid workers, all are volunteers. Call 1-888-496-2387 if YOU need financial help. And do come buy a mum Friday or Saturday.

Marsha Grogan, President, Operation PUP

To the Editor:

Several years ago when news events happened, I always watched for Lewis Grizzard’s remarks about it. Now I watch for Jimmy Powell’s editorial cartoons. He’s good! Hats off to his Chick-Fil-A cartoon a couple of weeks ago!

Sincerely, Dorothy Handy



T.C. Herald Editor
Once in a Blue Moon
By Charles Duncan

I sat in the press box at Frank McClure Stadium on Friday night and marveled at the fan turnout at a high school football game.

Times are tough, we all know that. But, when it comes to our kids, we’re there if they are.

Families in Union and Towns counties who had children in the band, on the football team, cheerleading squad and of course, the all important sideline staff members, they were there.

They wouldn’t miss it for the world.

It’s what makes our neighboring communities so special. We care, therefore we support our children’s efforts, whatever they may be. They could be competing in tiddlywinks, we’d still be there cheering them on.

On this night, it was a football game. And for once, yes, once in a blue moon, indeed, it was a football game.

Traditionally, Union County has dominated the

Indians. It looked that way in the first half, as the Panthers built a 14-0 lead on Towns. Union put an exclamation point on that lead with an Eric Hougrand 44-yard field goal as time expired at the end of the first half.

Down 17-0, the Indians didn’t do the usual, roll over and play dead. Actually, it was just the opposite as Indians’ Head Coach Kyle Langford said something inspirational to his charges during the halftime break.

Towns County came out fired up, offensively and defensively. Likewise, their fan base was just as charged. It was a rivalry game, full tilt.

Coach Langford once told me that it’s not a rivalry unless you win every once in a blue moon. There was a blue moon on Friday, Coach

Langford had to be feeling good about his team’s chances.

The Indians played defense onto the football, and Towns County took advantage of those opportunities. They pulled within three points.

Time wasn’t on their side and neither was Hougrand. The one thing the Indians so desperately needed on this night, and for the remainder of the season, is a kicker. They have one, but he’s not experienced.

It was an exhausting effort on both sides of the ball. Union, just hoping the clock would run, and Towns just hoping they could get in position to score again.

As is the factor of most sporting events, time is a team’s worst enemy.

Union County Head Coach Brian Allison and his staff could let out a collective sigh of relief as the final horn sounded on Friday night. A blue moon had passed and the Panthers

consecutive winning streak against the Indians reached 15 straight.

Neither coach was pleased with the outcome of the game. Coach Allison was fit to be tied after the contest. Coach Langford felt the same way.

Panther fans were happy to begin the season with a win. Indian fans felt like they had scored a moral victory.

Either way, once in a blue moon, two teams will lock horns and give it their all. On this night, the moon wasn’t blue enough for the Indians to pull out a victory.

In the end, it is what it is. Both teams left it on the field. Isn’t that what it’s really all about?

They both played their hearts out and that’s all they could do. They both made it a ball game, and as I watched that big blue moon over Frank McClure Stadium afterward, I had the feeling that a rivalry was renewed.



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
By Don Jacobsen

Your kids probably don’t use marijuana, although it is the single most widely-used illegal drug in the world. UN estimates are that there are some 200 million users globally. Hopefully your youngster is not among them because new studies reinforce some of the reasons that they shouldn’t.

In a recent study it was determined that within the United States, 23 percent of high school students said they had smoked marijuana within the previous month, making it more popular than cigarettes in that age group. It is widely seen by teens as a “recreational drug” that provides short-term enjoyment but not long-term effect. New research is demonstrating that is a false assumption.

Here is the blockbuster conclusion: Teens who use “pot” frequently showed a measurable drop in IQ, which drop in some cases did not even appear until years later. The study followed a thousand teens for twenty-five years and is the first such longitudinal study designed to measure IQ both before and after marijuana use. The results of the study – which appear in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences – are compelling.

Those users who were deemed as “dependent” as

teens showed an average IQ drop of 8 points, meaning that for a person of average intelligence, rather than ranking at 50% of the population in IQ, they would rank in the lower 29% by the end of the test period. Sadly, for those who were regular users at age 18, even quitting did not reverse the problem. Dr. Duncan Clark, a researcher at the University of Pittsburgh, concludes that to preserve one’s IQ, “it is best to avoid marijuana entirely, no matter what your age.”

So, what’s the take-away here? Keep talking to your kids. Keep listening to your kids. Not to sit in judgment but to make sure you know them. What if some behaviors change, such as: a sudden change of friends, lethargy and a loss of motivation, sudden drop in school performance, loss of interest in grooming and cleanliness, loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy (music, hobbies, etc.), loss of interest in spiritual activities, unusual demand for isolation from the family?

It may be time for a discussion which begins with the phrase, “Honey, let’s talk; I want you to put my mind at ease.”

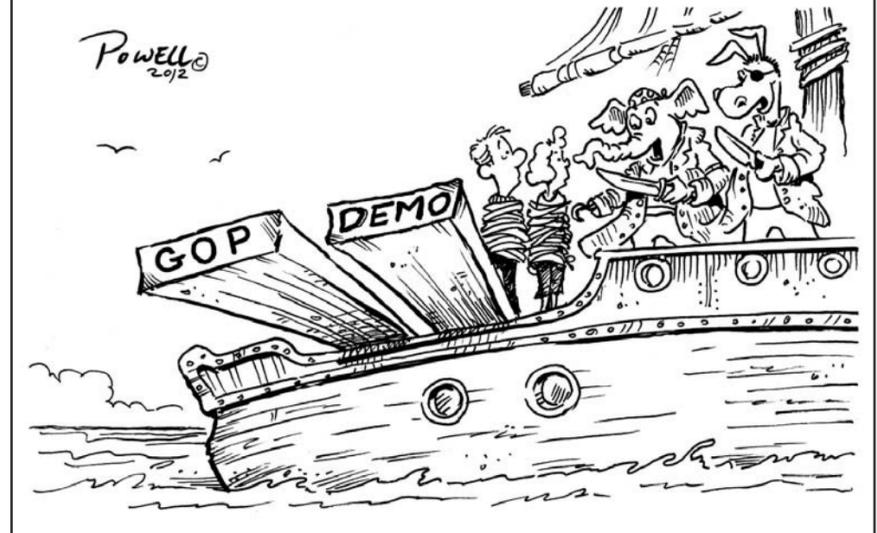
Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net.

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 E-MAILED 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.



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