

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:
Honorable Mayor, Barbara Mathis:

This is just a quick note to comment, praise and thank several of your city employees for a job well done! On Friday night, August 14th, a violent storm approached the east side of Hiawassee. About 6:30 PM a bolt of lightning from that storm hit a tree just above the pumping station on the top of Victoria Woods. Immediately, we lost all water in our house. I immediately called Carl Grizzle and reported the loss of water. He said he would be "right there", and indeed he was.

Within 30 minutes of my call, Carl was assessing the pump problem, and calling for help from his team: Brian Davis, Jack Dillard and Ron Webster. It is my understanding that Carl was heading to dinner with his family when my call came in. He sent his family on to dinner and headed up the hill to assess the water problem.

He and his team worked on our water problem until it was resolved around 10 PM. Carl's sense of duty and his high work ethic speak very highly of him as an individual, and leader of his team. His team performed admirably and enthusiastically during the dark, damp hours that Friday night.

Carl and his team are hereby praised for their dedication to duty and willingness to stick with the problem until it was resolved. Their actions that Friday night reflect favorably on themselves and on the City of Hiawassee! Please extend to them our thanks for a job well done!

John and Karen Gallogly

To the Editor:

Golden Parachute

I am not sure how to start this letter as my first inclination after reading last week's *Towns County Herald* was to use words inappropriate in mixed company or for publication according to the ways some of us were brought up.

I am absolutely flabbergasted at the lamebrain idea of giving an employee a six month golden parachute after the voluntarily "quit". I cannot but ask myself if the Board of Directors of BRMEMC has totally lost their minds or if they were just born stupid.

After last year's fiasco of Taylor's scandal, for which I repeatedly called for Akins' resignation or dismissal, I did not believe that things could get any worse. Yet this time the Board has surpassed itself in total and complete incompetence. Last year I asked why, as per Mr. Minor's report, the Finance committee had not looked at an aging report in ten years. The answer on BRMEMC's web site "The finance committee was operating with numbers supplied by management". These people are presumed experienced business men and women. It did not occur to even one of these so called experienced business people to take the initiative and ask management, not even once, what the status of outstanding receivables was. Not even once in ten years.

Now they, at a special called meeting, for which we, the membership is paying each board member \$300, as per the BRMEMC web site, have come up with, and approved, a proposal that I can only describe as moronic. We the membership, are going to pay almost \$70,000, when you add in payroll expenses, to an employee that resigned, quit, choose your definition, it amounts to the same thing.

It is firmly my opinion that whichever board member came up with this harebrained proposal should step down immediately along with all members that voted for it. We need people who are going to manage intelligently and responsibly, both for the members and the staff who work hard and responsibly. This is a slap in the face to both. One would think that after last year's fiasco which triggered a fierce distrust by the membership of the board, that they would have acted responsibly. Quite on the contrary, they have proven that they have absolutely no respect for the membership nor the capability of responsibility. What they have proven to us is their true colors; ineptitude.

You may ask yourself why the board held a special meeting, which cost us \$2,700 - in board member dues plus other incidental fees, just 12 days before the annual meeting? Most probably because on September 12th the "good old boys" will most likely lose their majority and such a lame brained proposal would stand no chance in passing if we voted the right people in.

To quote Forrest Gump: "Stupid is as stupid does."
Respectfully submitted,
Richard Botting

Editor's Note: Three new board members were elected on Saturday, September 12, 2015: Roy Perren, Mickey Cummings and Larry Williams.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

We left you last week in Buffalo, NY on our journey to reconnect with family and friends.

When someone says "New York," there are many who make the mistake of thinking that New York City is representative of the entire state. This is about as far from the truth as Buffalo is from Manhattan, and that distance is about 400 miles.

Anyone accustomed to thinking that American agriculture is limited to the South or the Midwest might be surprised at the mile after mile of vineyards, orchards, cornfields and pumpkin patches that can be found in western, or "Upstate" New York. Farmer's markets and roadside stands are abundant, and the diversity of crops is evident in the grocery stores. Food prices are considerably lower than what we are forced to pay in Hiawassee, where we are subjected to "resort area" prices. In general the price for a wide range of grocery items in the Buffalo area was 10-15% lower (although much of that savings was erased at the gas pump, where prices averaged about \$.60 per gallon higher).

The diversity of produce in the northeast is mirrored by the diversity of cultures that have amalgamated over time in these older sections of our country. Hiawassee and the surrounding areas have never been without good places to eat, especially in the home cooking department, but we are short on variety at our restaurants. Even in rural areas of the Upstate we were able to choose from German, Italian, Polish, Irish, Scandinavian and many other cuisines, and we tried them all. Most of the restaurants and diners we visited made excellent use of the local supply of fresh vegetables, farm raised meats and dairy and locally caught fish. This was such a welcome change from so many restaurants that feed their patrons out of the back of a Sysco truck. If you like to eat, you will not be disappointed by a visit to Buffalo and the Upstate.

Among the highlights of our culinary adventures was a visit to the famous Anchor Bar, where Teresa Bellissimo "invented" Buffalo Wings almost 40 years ago. We also visited Schwabl's Restaurant in West Seneca which serves the famous "beef on wheels" or "kimmelweck," which is a delicious handmade Kaiser roll topped with kosher salt and caraway. Don't forget the horseradish. Schwabl's has been in continuous operation since 1837.

The longevity of places like Schwabl's highlights another pleasing aspect of some of the older parts of the country. Places like Buffalo seek to preserve their architectural heritage and realize, like many places in Europe still do, that what is worth building is worth sustaining. So much of our history has been lost, not only Americana, but also some of the great architectural achievements of the 19th and 20th centuries have been abandoned to ruin or bulldozed to make way for economic expedients devoid of art, empty of soul and weak in craftsmanship.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE EMAILED OR MAILED

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Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

We have attempted to replace all three with technology, and the endless miles of strip mall metal buildings will leave behind for future generations very little that speaks well of the character of this one.

Our time in the Buffalo area was very rewarding, and my wife, who grew up in the area, might very well agree with me that Yankees in their natural habitat can be as warm and welcoming as anyone on earth, and the people of Buffalo in their generosity and good humor are second to none in terms of hospitality.

We returned from our journey glad to be home, eager for the halcyon days of late summer in this, our blessed corner of the earth. Our trip left us content, but a bit saddened by a sense of loss, of our history, and of a certain kind of vitality that created a generation of prosperity which spread across the nation. That prosperity has withdrawn in recent years, extracted from us by a parasitic government which taxes us to maintain corporate empires. It is squeezed from us one adipocerosus drop at a time and collected in the endless miles of cheap necessities that exist to feed the cravings created to fatten us for the harvest.

But at the end of it all, and all along our journey there was hope. A young man in Buffalo who recently returned from serving in Afghanistan just bought a first home for his wife and two kids. His wife works full time while she goes to nursing school. The grandparents help take care of the kids when they are not working themselves. Another young man equally determined to provide for his family in Erwin, TN, works in hayfields until exhausted, picks up scrap metal to sell and hammers nails when he can get the work. A young woman in Blairsville, GA endures a low paying restaurant job waiting for the chance to go back to boot camp after being unable to complete her training because of an accident.

Life is not easy for these three families, and the wind is not at their backs as they face a future of uncertainty, but their resolve is the equal of any generation before them, and if they are a representative of the generation now beginning to take the reins in this country, then there is much hope for the future.



The Veterans' Corner

By
Scott Drummond,
USCG Veteran

With Hellen Kimsey's permission, of course!

More original history, taken from Todd Kimsey's WWII scrapbook and written by Todd's "buddy and pal" Acree E. Brown while in Yokosuka, Japan aboard the USS Pasadena (CL-65), which endured two killer typhoons and a long rough patch in Iwo Jima, and other strategic "vacation" locales in the beautiful South Pacific.

This was typed sometime between 1945-1946 by Acree who now serves with our Lord and Savior, in his special Heaven. Todd and Hellen are two bright, humorous, warm and wonderful gems of our North Georgia Mountains and were kind enough to share this first person poetic description of life aboard a warship, during WWII. Original history, or that closest to the source, is often extremely hard to find, but typically is more honestly reminiscent of actual conditions, un-politicized, and unbiased facts. This is right from the heart of another one of America's "Greatest Generation." Thanks to Todd and Hellen, who never quit teaching. All our men and women who have served can relate to these lines, and especially those who have served aboard military vessels, bases, or camps in "less than pristine" conditions.

To the Fire-controlmen

*When the final trumpet sounds
And the people
Start to praying;
When the oceans
Engulf the land,
And the world is
Rocking and swaying
When God opens wide the
Pearly Gates
And St. Peter reads the roll;
There'll be a special Heaven
For the fellows in Fire Control.
A Heaven where
All the directors*

*Always work just right;
Where the Indicator Regulators
Have valves all snug and tight.*

*Where the seas
Are always calm,
No roll, nor pitch nor dip;
No matching pointers in local,
No watching the radar pip.
A Heaven where I'll never
Stand a watch,
But spend all our time
In our sacks,
And never have to worry at all
About the parallax.*

*And when the
Wacky power drives
Begin to whine,
And wail, and screech,
All we'll have to do
Is leave it to the Chief.
A Heaven where the WAVES
Will do the mess-cooking
And everyone
Will have their rates,
And the scrubbing of the decks
Will be done by Bosun mates.*

*Where we'll always
Hit the target
With the first salvo we fire---
And get a month's leave
And spend it at a bar.
A Heaven where the chow
Will resemble food,
And we can sleep in late,
And never have to show a card
Each time we leave a gate.*

*Where they'll never
Have inspection,
Gunnery practice, or G.O.
And whether you
Go to sea or not
Will be entirely up to you.
Yes, we'll have a
Special Heaven
Where the music
Will rise and swell,
And God will say to us,
"Welcome Fire-controlmen,
How are things
Down there in Hell?"*

*So weep, ye saints and sinners,
When this old world
Starts to dying;
For we'll be
Doing the laughing,
And you can do the crying!*

*Acree E. Brown
Semper Paratus*

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