

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



## Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Like everywhere else throughout the world, we, the LEGAL firearm owners in the USA - WHO ARE NOT CRAZY support and pray for the families and friends of those killed not only at the Newtown, CT school, but throughout our country. Our hearts and minds are with them and offer all the support we can provide. However, President Obama like all the anti-gun individuals and groups are using this as a way to push their agendas - to outlaw legal ownership of all firearms. A gun is like a car - it can only kill someone if the person using it wants to do so. In fact, cars cause many more deaths and injuries each year than firearms. President Obama wants to start his agenda by outlawing "assault" type weapons. These apparently are rifles that are made to resemble military weapons. The BIG DIFFERENCE is that civilian weapons are semi-automatic, the trigger must be pulled for each shot, while military weapons are full-automatic, pulling the trigger once can cause all the ammunition in the weapon to fire one after the other. The trigger does not need to be pulled for each shot. Rather than take away legal ownership of firearms, the politicians must find a way to prevent criminals and the mentally unfit to be unable to buy and own firearms of any type. We must have mandatory prison sentences for anyone possession a firearm during a felony. The criminal would be unable to be paroled for the original crime until the complete firearm sentence is completed and at least 50% of the original sentence is completed. Additionally, politicians must find a way to have anyone with mental health problems be seen by a reputable psychiatrist and the doctor sign off to allow the individual to own firearms.

Rather than take the easy way out and ban weapons that are now legal, politicians must think of the right way to address this matter.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Christopher D. Mazur

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

I harp quite a bit in this column about the serious consequences that can develop when mom and dad stoop to arguing with their kids. I talk quite often about building respect in the family, much of which is shaped by the ways we talk to each other. Every once in a while some new study appears to underscore what I've been saying. It just happened again.

Everyone has heard of the stupid practice of glue sniffing. I mean, it can cause brain damage, lung damage, kidney damage, depression and even death - sometimes with the very first use - a high price to pay for the possibility of a temporary "high." So why do kids do it? A recent study in the state of Idaho sought to find the answer to that question. Studying several hundred 13- and 14-year olds, researchers found some interesting answers.

One out of every seven of these earlites reported they had used inhalants at least once in their lifetime. Incidentally, other substances were also used, like paint thinner, nail polish remover, some kinds of high-lighters, even gasoline. Seeking to understand why they would experiment with such a high-risk behavior here is what they learned:

To no one's surprise, the stronger the bond between parent and teen the less apt the youngster was to experiment.

Also, if the family had rules that were positively stated and consistently enforced, the kids were less apt to wander into this dangerous activity. You and I know enough about family dynamics we could have predicted those outcomes.

But here is the part of the study I found most interesting... In those families where "aggressive verbal interactions" (researcher-speak for "arguments") were common the percentage of kids who experimented with inhalant abuse was highest. In fact, this was the most significant predictor of the undesirable behavior. They concluded that frequent arguments, serious arguments, insulting, name calling, and yelling at each other significantly increased the likelihood of inhalant use.

We might have predicted that. When youngsters are treated with respect they are less apt to feel the need to act out in unhealthy ways. When they know they are loved and valued by those closest to them they tend to value themselves more highly also, and that helps them make more responsible decisions.

Old King Solomon, purportedly the wisest man who ever lived, was on to something when he said, "A gentle answer deflects anger; harsh words make tempers flare."

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

## Check out your local Coast Guard



You are invited to the next meeting of the North Georgia U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 2-3 on January 8, 2013, 7 p.m. at the old 911 building past the Chamber of Commerce and EMS building on Jack Dayton Circle. Come see if there is a job with this volunteer group that you could help with this spring and summer; you are needed.

The basic unit of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is the flotilla, with each flotilla being assigned a specific area of operation. The Northeast Georgia flotilla was chartered in April 2010 to establish a Coast Guard presence on the lakes of Northeast Georgia. The flotilla's area of operations includes six lakes: Lake Blue Ridge, Lake Notely, Lake Chatuge, Lake Burton, Lake Rabun and Seed Lake. The 20-plus members of this flotilla are civilian volunteers who work and live in this area.

Flotilla members focus most of their efforts on recreational boating safety. Vessel Examiners provide free vessel safety checks to verify recreational boaters have required equipment and that it is working properly; program visitors provide boating safety information in display racks at marinas and boat stores; instructors provide boating safety education courses to the boating public to increase their understanding of boating laws and safe practices; and boat coxswains and crewmembers patrol the lakes to assist boaters in

### 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:

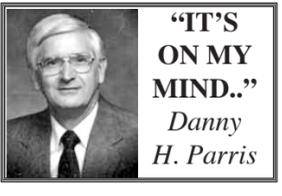
Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net. Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial 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.

distress. Our goal is to make these lakes a safer place to work and play. We would love to have you join us in this important endeavor.

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

### Who's following you?

I am sure most of you have probably read this, but since we begin a new year today I thought this might speak to us.

A mom was concerned about her kindergarten son walking to school. He didn't want his mother to walk with him. She wanted to give him the feeling that he had some independence but yet know that he was safe. So she had an idea how to handle it. She asked a neighbor, Mrs. Goodnest, if she would please follow him to school in the mornings, staying at a distance, so he probably wouldn't notice her. Mrs. Goodnest said that since she was up early with her toddler anyway, it would be a good way for them to get some exercise as well, so she agreed. The next school day, Mrs. Goodnest and her little girl, Marcy, set out following behind Timmy as he walked to school with another neighbor boy he knew. She did this for the whole week. As the boys walked and chatted, kicking stones and twigs, Timmy's little friend noticed the lady was following them as she seemed to do every day all week. Finally he said to Timmy, "Have you noticed that

lady following us to school all week? Do you know her?" Timmy nonchalantly replied, "Yeah, I know who she is." The friend said, "Well, who is she?" "That's just Shirley Goodnest" Timmy replied, "and her daughter Marcy." "Who is she and why is she following us?" "Well", Timmy explained, "every night my mom makes me say the 23rd Psalm with my prayers, 'cuz she worries about me so much. And in the Psalm, it says 'Shirley Goodnest and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life,' so I guess I'll just have to get used to it."

None of us are sure where the journey of 2013 will lead us, but we have the assurance that no matter where our path takes us, Goodness and Mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives. If we travel through the valley of grief, Goodness and Mercy shall be with us. If our bodies are attacked by some major illness, Goodness and Mercy shall be with us. If we suffer financial reverses, Goodness and Mercy shall be with us. If we are blest with good health, enjoy financial success and our families are spiritually healthy, Goodness and Mercy shall be with us. If we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, Goodness and Mercy will be with us and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Pray that God will bless you with His Goodness and Mercy in 2013.



"Of course we're here to serve...and the taxpayers ought to stop fussing and just get on with it!"

## 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. 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.  
**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 Uccigoy 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. 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 new Hiawassee Senior 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 mtnregartsandcraftsguild.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 Quinlan 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. Caregivers or family members are encouraged to attend. 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.shootingcreekbasketweavers.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** meet 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 Hiawassee Senior Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch. Call 706-379-2191.

**Towns County Herald**  
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OFFICE LOCATED AT 446 NORTH MAIN STREET  
"THE MALL" HIAWASSEE (706) 896-4454  
Publication Number 635540. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points.  
EMAIL Address: tcherald@windstream.net

POSTMASTER: Send change of address to:  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD  
P.O. BOX 365 HIAWASSEE, GEORGIA 30546

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