

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Wednesday night, January 2nd, I went to see the movie "Lincoln" at the cinema at Funworld for the 6:20 showing. I had gone alone and as I was walking to my vehicle which was parked close to the building, I tripped on a speed bump and fell. My teeth hit the pavement first and a nice man and woman helped me up and were very concerned as blood was coming out of my mouth. They kept wanting to help me and I must have been confused from the fall and I kept saying I needed to get home and I left. By the time I got home and talked with my family we all knew I should have gone inside and gotten help and reported what had happened.

I have tried to get it reported ever since but have not been able to accomplish anything.

If the lady & gentleman who saw me fall read this, would you please call me at 828-837-6407 or 828-361-6778.

Thank you,
Donna Bryant

Dear Editor and Publisher:

My wife and I have been part-time "flatlander" residents of Hiawassee for 36 years. We spent each summer here since 1976 because we were both teachers and wanted to enjoy the cool weather and the beautiful North Georgia Mountains.

It was wonderful working every summer on our 91 year old house with a tin roof, locust log sills, pine floor, chestnut plank walls, and of course no electric or plumbing when we purchased it. We upgraded each visit, enjoying the work and being in this community.

We consider the Towns County Herald to be an integral part of Hiawassee, and I am writing to let you know how much we have recently been enjoying your paper. For the last few years I have noted a very positive change in the number of interesting articles which are relevant to this community and are very well written.

I strongly feel that the reason for these very positive changes is Libby Shook's writings. The paper would not have many pages if not for her interesting articles.

The type of articles she writes personifies the "local interest" aspect of your paper. News events and information concerning Hiawassee is extensive. I had little hint that there was this much going on in our community until reading the Herald. She is obviously out in the community meeting and interviewing people, and gaining detailed information about the local events and news.

The Herald appears to be on a good path positively reflecting the events and news in our community. Your leadership and your entire staff are to be commended.

Sincerely,
Robert Mitchell

RARE KIDS: WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Walking in a large shopping mall recently I noticed a man approaching, maybe in his early 30s. I don't remember seeing anyone quite as disheveled since I was visiting in a third world country. His hair appeared as though it had not been combed - or washed - in recent memory. His face and hands were dirty, the sole was coming loose on his right shoe. His pants were badly worn. I mean badly. You've seen kids wear jeans with intentional holes in the legs, right? Well, I doubt that the holes in this man's jeans were intentional, but they were certainly not a fashion statement. I tend not to be judgmental of someone in dire financial straits or who is not well-coifed, but as I said, this one caught my attention.

As he approached I noticed something printed on his shirt and although I didn't want to appear to be staring I was curious to read it. As we passed I read: "If you met my family you'd understand." Now I grant that I don't know where he got the shirt. Maybe crumpled in the bottom of a bin at a thrift store. The fact is, he chose to wear it. (If he hadn't wanted to be a walking billboard, he could have at least turned it inside out; it

wouldn't have compromised his wardrobe a bit.)

I thought, Here is a man making a non-subtle statement not too different from the one many others are making. It goes like this: "It's not my fault." I know I'm mean to my kids, but what do you expect, that's the way my dad treated me. I know I don't show respect to my wife, my mom didn't respect my dad, either. So I smoke - after all, I grew up in a family of smokers. I know I don't manage our family finances very well, but what do you expect, my family never had anything either. I know I should take my kids to church, but my family never took me to church. See, it's not my fault. I'm a victim and if you met my family you'd understand. But, we are not a product of our heritage, we are a product of our choices.

So, although we can't re-write the beginning of our story, we can write the next chapter. Then one day maybe our children - joyous, fulfilled, unselfish, caring - can wear a T-shirt that says, "If you met my family you'd understand."

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

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The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Over the weekend a young friend and I watched Wile E. Coyote chasing the Roadrunner in that mystical cartoon desert land of many treacherous cliffs. There were so many parallels between our own coyote economy and the misadventures of Wile E. that the humor was painted with a thick coat of digitally remastered irony.

When he believes that he is on solid ground, believes, mind you, Mr. Coyote can walk on thin air in much the same way that the full faith and credit of the flat dollar keeps our economy suspended. Don't look down, Wile E. Don't look down.

For months now, Cartoon Congress and Looney Tunes Media have participated in a drama of epic proportions in a crescendo of fear and dread as we approached the "fiscal cliff." The drama was a distraction. It was framed for us as a debate over taxes, but taxes were but one facet of the issues at stake. The Federal Regime could tax the rich at a 100% rate and the revenue received would only scratch the surface of government debt. Debt will be the central issue in Act II of this political play.

What is at stake in this confrontation of parasitic political professional wrestlers is how to maintain the status quo for as long as possible – the status quo where a small group of elites can conjure dollars out of thin air, where a permanent class of professional politicians can retain power and a vast military-industrial complex be maintained to protect corporate profits around the world. The problem for us, for the unwashed masses who work and pay taxes is this: In order to keep Government E. Coyote from experiencing a hard landing, we have to be a different kind of country from the one in which those of us who remember the Roadrunner grew up.

For 31 out of the last 35 years, government has spent more money than it has taken in. To compound the problem, the largest demographic group in the United States, "Baby Boomers" born between 1946 and

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.*

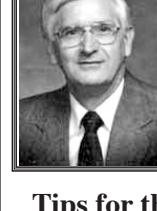
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1964, are beginning to retire. What the government calls "Human Resources," Social Security, Medicare/Medicaid, Unemployment and social services, consumes the lion's share of the budget at 67%. Military spending, or at least the money which can be accounted for, consumes 17% of the budget at over \$650 billion per year. All in all, the government is now spending about a trillion dollars more each year than it takes in. This is according to the government's own numbers. However, the government actually spends a lot more than that.

The tax code is marbled with deductions and subsidies for special interests like layers of fat in a cheap steak. Tax breaks for buying a corporate jet does not, at a casual glance, look like "spending," but that is exactly what it is. It has been estimated that by eliminating all "subsidies" to special interests (including the American voter) hidden in the tax code, government "spending" could be reduced by 30%, or put another way, revenue could be increased by the same amount.

So this is what the fight is really about. Our bills are going up no matter what we do. Changing demographics dictates that fewer people will be working to pay for more who do not or cannot. The government cannot continue to conjure money out of thin air forever without destroying the economy. We cannot "grow our way out" of debt by taking more money away from consumers and small businesses. We must spend less. There is a great deal of "spending" hidden in the tax code, but there will likely be an ugly fight over the votes that Congress believes it has purchased with that money.

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

Tips for the New Year

As a new year rolls around, it seems to me that they roll around a lot faster than they used to. I know that a year is still measured as 365 days, but I declare as one gets older it seems someone has stolen a large number of those days. It's hard for me to believe that I am as old as I am. I still feel

young at heart (although other parts of my body feel older). Age is just a number anyway. Some people say they don't want to live to be 100 – but they're not 99. As we begin 2013 we should not be just one year older, but another year smarter.

Although, that depends on whether the old cliché is true, "You live and learn." My observation is that some people live but never learn. On the other hand, a lot of folks learn, but they never live. If you want to stay young through 2013 the following tips that I read recently could be very profitable if practiced daily.

1. Throw out non-essential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctor worry about them. That's why you pay him/her.

2. Keep cheerful friends. The gourches pull you down.

3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer (if you have grandchildren they are a great resource), crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the

brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." The devil's name is alzheimers.

4. Enjoy the simple things. When the children are young that's all you can afford. When they are in college that's all you can afford. When you are in retirement that's all you can afford!

5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath. Laugh so much that you can be tracked in a store by your distinctive laughter.

6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life (other than the Lord) is ourselves. Be alive while you are alive, don't put out a mailbox on the highway of death and just wait in residence for your mail.

7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it is family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.

8. Cherish your health. If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.

9. Don't take guilt trips. Go to the mall, the next county, a foreign country, but not to guilt country.

10. Tell the people you love that you love them at every opportunity and love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and your neighbor as yourself.

I agree with Bernard Baruch who said, "To me, old age is always fifteen years older than I am."

Have something to sell?

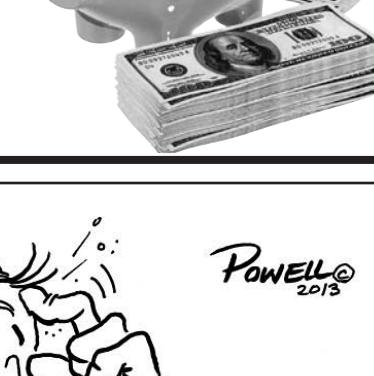
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"We may not have gone over the fiscal cliff,
but somehow I still wound up in a hole."

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Rep. Stephen Allison, Georgia House of Representatives, 404-656-0177 or 0185
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