

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

The letter last week about the Navy Yard shooting requires a response. The writer seemed to have the idea that Democrats would advocate signs and soothing music to avoid this type of thing. I'm not sure where the writer got this idea, my understanding is that they advocate comprehensive background checks (which might have prevented this event since the shooter had serious known mental issues. The NRA opposes this for reasons I don't understand) and also limiting the capacity of magazines. I believe assault weapons should also be banned as they aren't really hunting weapons and while they weren't used in this case they have been in several recent shootings like Newtown and the Colorado shootings.

Yours truly,  
Luther Elder

To the Editor:

As an occasional attendee, I believe one of the most civic-minded and productive organizations in Towns County is the Mountain Movers and Shakers. So it was with some surprise that I read the front page story in the TCH September 18th edition on our Congressman Doug Collins having to postpone his September 13 appearance before the group.

I think it is irresponsible for a journalist to not reach out to the Congressman's office for at least a quote to explain the last minute cancellation of his appearance. I also share the disappointment of the MMS founders and attendees but I understand the organization was notified as soon as the conflict developed with time to notify prospective attendees.

Congressman Collins does represent the Georgia 9th District of which Towns County is an important part but his title is actually United States Congressman from the Georgia 9th District and as such when he has the opportunity to reach a broader audience across the U.S. I would expect him to take it. Especially when Congressman Collins was trying to prevent us from engaging in war with Syria and stop the train wreck known as Obamacare at that time.

I would suggest that your reporter and editor owe our Congressman Collins an apology and that the Mountain Movers and Shakers reschedule the Congressman's appearance as soon as possible.

Best regards,  
Patrick Malone

*Editor's Note: Any time that one of our elected officials stands up a group of his/her constituents to gain face time on national or local media, we will report it.*

Dear Editor,

Last week's paper contained an article on the BRMEMC annual meeting held on September 21st at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. Your writer correctly stated that members present at the meeting were given an opportunity to ask questions and/or give comments on matters of interest to the membership; and that questions were asked about the "customer charge" on each power bill. The article contained a report of a one sentence answer, attributed to me, which was incomplete, out of context and gave a misleading sense of an unwillingness to fully respond to the members' concerns.

In response to the legitimate question a member asked about the "customer charge", I gave a full explanation of the reason for, and meaning of that charge. Briefly stated, the "customer charge" is each member's share of the costs incurred by BRMEMC in having the electric power distribution system and all its components up and running so that power is available at the meter of each customer at any given time. There is a cost incurred in having electric power distributed to each home and business whether or not the owner turns on the switch in order to consume the power. In other words, the electricity is there ready to go when the switch is turned on, and the cost of getting it there is something that is shared by all the members. Each member pays a "customer charge" to have the power delivered to their meter in addition to the charge for the actual power used by the member. In determining the "customer charge", BRMEMC considers all the overhead expenses of operating and maintaining the system, including the costs of materials and wages, the costs of acquiring, installing and maintaining the components of the system, as well as insurance and regulatory compliance costs, most of which expenses are incurred regardless of the amount of electric power any particular customer uses at any particular time. These expenses, cumulatively, are the cost of doing business that are shared by all members.

After responding to the question, I was sure to ask the questioning member whether or not the answer was clear and if she had any further questions about the matter. I regret that your staff writer chose to report the answer to the question as only the terse and flippant phrase "It's the cost of doing business," leaving the impression that BRMEMC did not take the question seriously nor provide an appropriate and complete response.

Larry Sorgen,  
General Counsel for BRMEMC

Dear Editor:

Many thanks to Commissioner Kendall

Commissioner Kendall, the citizens of Towns County are very grateful to you for making the Handicapped section of Veterans Memorial Park more legible and accessible to all handicapped citizens needing access to the park. Especially those who have served in previous military capacity in this great country we live in and now find themselves needing accessibility to attend services honoring those who have served in the part and those that are currently serving.

Ferry Bush



T.C. Herald Editor  
It is what it is  
By Charles Duncan

I usually don't respond to Letters to the Editor. But this week, I'll be responding to two.

First Patrick Malone writes that Heather Poole and myself should apologize to 9th District Congressman Doug Collins for telling the Towns County community that they were stood up by the good Congressman in the Towns County Herald.

Rep. Collins, who also represents Union County in Washington, opted to appear on Greta Van Susteren's On the Record in Washington, DC rather than speak to a crowd of constituents at the Mountain Movers and Shakers meeting two weeks ago in Young Harris.

The fact of the matter is, he let the Mountain Movers and Shakers know about this on the Thursday evening before he was supposed to attend the next morning. He stood up a crowd of people that was in much anticipation of hearing him speak.

He did this to get face time on a national forum. He has the opportunity to do this because the people of the 9th Congressional District of Georgia elected him to office, Towns County included.

Greta could have waited.

It was what it was, and it is what it is. Elected officials must be held to a higher standard.

Does this mean I don't support Doug Collins anymore? No it doesn't. It was a rookie mistake.

It's strange that Patrick praises the Mountain Movers and Shakers with so much adoration. If he read the article in its entirety, he would have discovered that this organization that he praised so highly did not take kindly to Rep. Collins' absence.

I can understand being called back to Washington for an important vote, or making a Committee decision that impacts the masses.

However, the subjects of Syria and Obamacare have been preached and shouted about throughout the halls of Congress and the streets of America. It's not a new issue. The truth of the matter is the interview with Greta was all about face time on national television.

Do I or my reporter owe Doug an apology? No. Doug owes an apology to the tremendous turnout of people that came to hear him speak. This event was highly adver-

### 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.*

It was on the front page of the Towns County Herald two weeks prior to the event.

Patrick, I respond to your letter not in ill spirit, but to let you know that if we keep cutting slack to our elected officials, we're in for a long and rugged haul in the future. Our elected officials are elected by the masses, and it is the masses that they must answer to.

I still respect Doug and I forgive him for this regrettable error in judgment. But Patrick, our newspaper would have incurred the wrath of the masses had this story not been reported. As for asking for a response about why an elected official would stand up his constituents in favor of being on national television. Well, think about it Patrick, the fact is Doug was on Greta's show, and not in Young Harris as previously committed. There's no need for an explanation, or a response from the Congressman. Sam Fullerton gave you the Congressman's response in the story. And, to add insult to injury, Doug didn't make the call himself, he had someone else do the calling for him.

That, my friend, was the ultimate insult to the Mountain Movers and Shakers.

I also respond this week to Larry Sorgen, general counsel for Blue Ridge Mountain EMC.

Larry, I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings for calling a walnut a walnut.

You chastised me for reporting that you said that the customer charge on all EMC bills is the cost of doing business.

Larry, it is what it is.

I didn't have space to explain your well thought out and calculated response to a question from an EMC customer.

Larry, I'm an EMC customer as well. I understand the customer charge. What I don't understand is your defensive posturing over a simple answer.

Larry, I respect you as a human being and as an outstanding attorney.

I simply didn't have 500 words to print your response to the questioning EMC customer.

Please forgive me. Next year, we'll save a little more space for your calculated and well thought out responses.

Have a nice day.



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

### The Master of words

Speakers, preachers, leaders, writers, politicians, teachers, and well, every human being that wants to be part of the human race must learn to communicate with words that make up language. Words are extremely important. They are tools of our trade. How and where you use them; how you spell them; how you put them together in sentences, whether in writing or speaking can bring joy, laughter, happiness, comfort and a host of other good results. On the other hand they can be the source of hurt, harm, hate and destruction. It is dependent on how you use them.

I read about a preacher who said in a sermon that God came from out of nowhere. After his message one of his parishioners called his hand and said, "Let's be reasonable about this!" The preacher said, "Fine." He said, "The reason God came from nowhere was that there wasn't anywhere for Him to come from, and coming from nowhere, He stood on nothing, for there was nowhere for Him to stand. And standing on nothing, He reached out to where there was nowhere to reach and caught something when there was nothing to catch and hung something on nothing and told it to stay there, and nobody said a word. And the reason nobody said anything was that there wasn't anybody there to say anything, so God Himself said, "That's good." It is good to have words of wisdom and speak that wisdom with words of wit.

Winston Churchill was brilliant in responding to those who challenged him or intended to insult him. On one occasion a woman said to Churchill, "Sir, you are drunk!" Churchill replied, "Madam, I am drunk and you are ugly, but tomorrow I shall be sober!" Another woman whom Churchill had provoked said to him, "You are obnoxious and if I were your wife I would put poison in your coffee!" Churchill looked her in the eye and said, "And if I were your husband, I would gladly drink it." George Bernard Shaw sent Churchill two tickets to his new play with this note, "I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend--if you have one." Churchill replied, "Cannot possible attend first night, will attend second night ---if there is one."

Mark Twain is my favorite author in using words of wisdom with words of wit. It is reported that he said to a friend once, "Why do you sit there looking like an envelope without any address on it?" He reportedly made this statement about a funeral: "I didn't attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it."

Clarence Darrow used words like speeding bullets that hit the brain before you could dodge. He once said, "I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."

I like what Oscar Wilde once said: "Some people cause happiness wherever they go; others - whenever they go."

When I cease to write this weekly column for the *North Georgia News* and the *Towns County Herald* I am sure that someone will say of me what William Faulkner said about Ernest Hemingway: "He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary." Or someone might say of me what Abraham Lincoln said of someone: "He can compress the most words into the smallest idea of any man I know." Groucho Marx once left a party and said, "I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But this wasn't it."

Have you read the Words of Jesus recently? No one has ever spoken like Jesus. He is the Master of Words for He is The Word!

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U.S. Congressman Doug Collins, 9th District, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-9893  
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