

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

Thank you for Shawn Jarrard's coverage of local participation in the People's Climate March. This was excellent coverage of the issue of human caused climate change and the great concern that led 400,000 of our fellow citizens to march in New York.

As mentioned, I attended along with 220 members of the Citizen's Climate Lobby. We support legislation to provide a market based economic foundation for ending fossil fuel dependence. This legislation, "Carbon Fee and Dividend", puts a price on CO2 emissions to reflect damages from fossil fuels, including pollution and climate change. The revenue from this fee would then be placed into a trust and returned directly as a dividend to American households. One of the signs carried by our group was a giant check for \$4,800, the estimated annual dividend for a family once the proposal is fully implemented.

A recent economic study shows that this proposal would save lives, increase jobs, improve the economy, and limit CO2 emissions. You can find out more at www.citizensclimatelobby.org. Thanks again for your coverage.

Brad Rouse

To the Editor:

Since Oct. 19-25 was National Friends of the Library Week and the newly renovated Towns County Library has reopened, I just wanted to brag about our local libraries. I do not know if many of you have visited the local libraries in Towns County. If you have not, I strongly encourage you to stop by for a visit.

We moved to Towns County in April 2012. I love reading and was a Friend of the Library (FOL) where we did live. One of the reasons we decided on the home we have now was the Mountain Regional Library. When I went to visit, I had never visited a more friendly library. Every employee there was very willing to help me in anything I needed. The very first thing I did when we moved here was to get a local library card. Now, we have been here for almost 3 years and I still cannot find a book without the staff helping. I am a hopeless cause, but no problem... the employees with a friendly smile have the patience of Job!

I went to the open house for the Towns County Library. For those of you who were not there, I think you should know some things about this library. 95% of the work done on this library was by local businesses. The building is tastefully decorated and very functional. The local businesses did a very professional job. And the building site was unsecured the whole time this renovation was happening. Nothing was stolen or vandalized. What a reflection on the whole community!

I am also a Friend of the Library in Towns County (FOLTC). We are always trying to help the libraries in this county. We raise money for the libraries by memberships, bake sales, book sales, etc. And all the money goes to the local libraries. If you are not a member, consider becoming a member.

I am so proud to call Towns County home and to be a FOLTC. I know a lot of us have very different political views. But I think we all can agree that libraries are important to communities.

Tammy Wells

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

"Better living through chemistry" is a variant of the slogan Dupont used for half a century until it adopted "The miracles of science" in 1999.

Science illuminates the middle path, and chemistry? Well, it makes possible just about everything we have and do in modern life.

The trouble with science, as it is practiced by the entities of corporate personhood, is that facts are often subservient to profit motives. Science motivated by profit can be used to blind rather than illuminate, as we witnessed in decades of "facts" reported by tobacco company scientists which insisted that smoking was not hazardous to health.

Thus we have often in this country lived "better" with toxins in the air, in the water and in the food chain; toxins that have been declared "safe" by corporate personhood and the government agencies which serve them. The epidemic of cancers we currently endure must be a small price to pay for making sure that CEOs get their bonuses and shareholders are content.

From time to time science which is not motivated by profit informs public opinion to the point where, regardless of the assurances of safety by government and industry, people demand action on and alternatives to some of the poisons that saturate our environment. Such is the case for products made with Bisphenol-A or "BPA."

BPA was first developed by a biochemist as an artificial estrogen supplement, but it proved to be a cheap and effective additive for a variety of consumer products. BPA is used in plastic bottles, dental composites and resin liners for food and beverage containers. Most Americans, male and female, now have traces of artificial estrogen in their bloodstream. BPA has been linked to hormone disruption, weight gain and breast cancer, among other medical problems.

Over time science, in one study after another, has illuminated one of the most insidious methods of exposure to BPAs and one of which most people are still unaware. About half of the thermal paper used in cash register and ATM receipts is embedded with BPA. To make the problem worse, the soaps, creams, sunscreens and hand sanitizers we use can accelerate the absorption of BPA into our bloodstream. When we take the BPA saturated receipt for our large fries and then eat those fries with the

same fingers, we are receiving a measurable dose of a compound which can contribute to a host of health issues. When we accept the register receipt at the grocery checkout line, fold it up and put it in our pocket or in a bag to be handled again at home, we absorb BPA. When we wash our hands it is already too late, because the compound penetrates skin on contact.

Industry has grudgingly responded to our concerns with BPA free plastics, although some of the replacements can be just as toxic. The "BPA-free" label now appears on a wide range of products, though Bisphenol-A still lines many metal cans and beverage containers and it is still widely used in thermal receipts.

As a customer we can always refuse a receipt or have it placed in the bag for safe handling later. As an employee working at a register, our options are more limited, but BPA-free receipt paper is available from a wide variety of sources and making that healthy choice is not an unreasonable request to make of an employer.

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

Seat seekers

As my grandmother Parris often said, "Have you ever seen the like?" As a kid I had no idea how to interpret what she was talking about. At the time it made no sense to a little boy. However, I believe she must have been referring to politicians. I have been to several county fairs, sorghum festivals, watermelon seed spitting contests, tobacco spittings and hog callings and so help me I don't believe I have ever seen anything like our modern pre-election face-offs. It takes the cake. From the county seat to the congressional seat a lot of folks are seeking a seat. Some of these seat seekers are on the hot seat. Unfortunately, as constituents we have a ring-side seat to one of the worst political circuses that I have ever witnessed. The things that are printed, broadcast and televised into our homes about the candidates are a putrefying mess. Pardon me while I gag! As a result we have more confused voters than at any point of history. The mailings have been massive as well as mysterious. How do you separate fact from fiction (lies)? It is no easy task for the honest sincere voter to make the right choice. Without doubt some politicians are absolutely low down and the half has never been told about them. At the same time there are some good, godly and well-meaning seat seekers who have been scandalized falsely. How should they react? What is the best response to someone who lies about you? I read somewhere that Edward Everett, an outstanding orator and statesman of the nineteenth century, was approached by a man who complained that he had been libeled in a newspaper. He asked the great American for

advice. Everett replied, "Do nothing!" He then went on to explain: "Half of those who bought the paper never saw the article. Half of those who saw the article did not read it. Half of those who read it did not understand it. Half of those who understood it did not believe it. Half of those who believed it are of no account anyway." I am sure that is good advice for some situations, but there are times that lies must be confronted. A number of these seat seekers are attempting to unseat those already seated. My personal opinion is that some of them have been sitting long enough and need to be unseated. To use an old, World War II expression, many of them have been "running the government's business by the seat of their pants" far too long. What they really need is a swift kick in the seat of their pants to unseat them from the front seat. Some of the present seat seekers who think they are in the driver's seat will be disappointed on Election Day because they will wind up as losers in the backseat. God have mercy on all of us voters. We need to buckle up our seat belts and prepare for a bumpy ride for the next few days. It seems to me that I have read something in the Bible about those who seek the upper-most seats, positions and places of recognition. Does the Bible not say that "to whom much is given, much will be required?" And does it not say that those who occupy places of leadership will be judged with greater severity?

In this writer's opinion our political system needs a revamping. We do not need seat seekers we need service seekers. Our generation desperately needs men and women who are not seeking to pad their pockets with perks and pensions but who are committed to serving their families, friends and fellow citizens in honesty and integrity, even if they lose in the process. Well, It's On My Mind!

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
By Don Jacobsen

Q: Dr. Don, we heard recently that some schools do not permit their teachers to refer to students as boys and girls. What's up with that?

A: For any who haven't watched this situation unfold, let me fill in the story. Is your child a boy or a girl? If you have a student in middle school in the Lincoln, Nebraska, public school system, no one can ask. In one of the most over-the-top initiatives in the history of American education, the Board of Education has informed teachers that they should ignore gender distinctions among their students. Teachers may assign bird names to groups of kids for instance, distinguish them by whether they prefer skateboards or bicycles, whether they prefer milk or orange juice, but no boys and girls, no this and hers.

There's more: If a situation should arise where the gender issue must be acknowledged, a teacher should list the options as "boy, girl, both or neither." Both? Neither? Pardon? This is political correctness run amok. Is it any wonder we have kids growing up with gender identity issues? We send them to school healthy and they come home not knowing who - or what - they are.

How do concerned parents respond to this kind of rash experiment? According to the Lincoln Journal Star and other area newspapers, there is much consternation and a lot of questions. Questions like, "Are there any norms; is there any place we can look to make sure we're not off track here to the detriment of our kids?" Perhaps a good place to begin is with the Good Book. In the only eye-witness account we have of the birth of the human family is the very clear statement, "male and female He created them." No ambivalence there.

I am sympathetic to the stated purpose of the educators. They want to create an environment where all kids - regardless - are accepted, safe. Noble goal. But we walk a fine line here. Some would argue, for instance, that if there are no distinctions between kids, all bullying will cease and school will be safer for all. But do we fix the bullying problem by declaring that all kids should see themselves as gender-neutral? Or do we fix it by helping those with bullying tendencies to become more compassionate and understanding? Now that sounds more like education to me, and less like reckless social engineering.

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net

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Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net



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 1 p.m.

Towns County Republican Party meets at 6:30 PM the 4th Thursday of each month at the new Senior Center. For more info call 706-994-3919.

Democratic Party of Towns County meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 5 PM at the new Senior Center.

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 Unicoy 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.

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 Towns County Rec

Center.

Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse, Hiawassee. The Board meets at 4 p.m., and the Guild at 6. Call us 706-896-0932.

Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month in Young Harris. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. A "Q & A" session follows. Details can be found at www.mcug.org.

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 at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridge-mountains.

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.

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. 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.

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.shootingcreek-basketweavers.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 meets 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 evening at 7 PM at the Red Cross building 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 Towns Co. Rec. Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch.

Brasstown Woodturners Guild meets 1st Saturday of month at 9:30 AM in HHS shop. For more info call J. C. at 706-896-5711.

VFW Post #7807 will be hosting a fish fry they 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month April - October. \$9. all you can eat from 4:30 - 7 PM.

Mountain Amateur Radio Club (MARC) meets 6:30 PM the 1st Monday of month at 1298 Jack Dayton Cir. (next to EMS), Hiawassee. For info call Al 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.

The Board of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce meet the second Monday of every month at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office, 1411 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris.

The Quilting Bee at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church in Family Life Center - Room 216. 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10 AM - 3 PM. Bring a sack lunch. For more information call Kathy Taylor at 706-835-6721 or Marilyn Bostrom at 706-897-4367.

Towns County Herald
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