

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

a water proof container, a fully charged cell phone, road flares, safety triangles, or both to make your vehicle more visible. Cat litter can be used as a traction aid, much like gravel, but is easier to carry in a vehicle.

Some things to consider when driving include slowing down by at least half the speed normally recommended and allowing at least twice the distance between your vehicle and another. Remember to use more gentle controls during slippery conditions. You should start, steer, and stop, your vehicle in a gentle, steady, and smooth fashion. If you are breaking and your brakes start to lock ease up on the pressure. If your rear wheels start to skid take your foot off the brake and steer the vehicle in the direction you want the front of the vehicle to go. Do not try to accelerate during a skid and never use cruise control during snowy, icy, or wet conditions.

If you become stuck or stranded in the snow, it is almost always better to stay with your vehicle and wait for help. If you run the vehicle to use the heater, be sure that the exhaust is not obstructed and always leave at least one window slightly open to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only leave your vehicle if you know exactly where you are and are certain that you will improve your conditions by doing so.

It is always better to stay off the roadways during winter weather conditions such as snow and ice. The information I have provided is by no means a comprehensive list and is only meant to offer some suggestions for keeping safe. All the preparation in the world cannot guarantee that you will arrive safely to your destination if you choose to drive in poor conditions. My first advice is that you not drive during extreme weather. If you must, please take precautions and drive carefully.

Being October, it seems early to be talking about winter driving; however, with our first threat of winter weather this week, this is a good time to address the issue. A big part of staying safe during winter weather is being prepared for winter driving. It is always best not to drive during snowy or icy conditions. Whenever possible, avoid driving during extreme winter weather. Even front-wheel-drive and four-wheel-drive vehicles are susceptible to snow and ice. If you must drive, the following suggestions are meant as helpful tips to avoid increasing the risk.

During winter you should always make certain that your vehicle is prepared. Vehicle preparation should include keeping your vehicle properly tuned up and making sure that your tires are in good shape. Tires should be properly inflated and have a tread depth of at least an eighth inch. Always keep plenty of fuel in your vehicle's tank and make sure that your battery is up to date and properly maintained.

There are several items that are recommended to be kept in your vehicle during cold weather. These are especially important if you are traveling long distances. Good items to have on hand include bottled water, a flashlight with extra batteries, extra warm clothing, a warm blanket or sleeping bag, jumper cables, snow chains, a tow strap, wooden matches in

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Republicans and democrats – get over yourselves. Political party is no better indicator of intelligence and character than which ball team you support or which jeans you wear. As long as you are distracted while shaking your fist at your neighbor, your pocket will continue to be picked.

An elected official beginning a four year term gets about a year to govern followed by three years of campaigning. Just a few days from now the election will finally be over and we may enjoy a brief respite from the hype and the hyperbole. On November 7th I do not think I will have ever been so happy to see the back of an election.

We have two eyes and two ears. Our brains are divided into two halves and thus we appear to be particularly suited for dichotomy and divisiveness. We separate ourselves according to religion, race, sex, age, ethnicity and economics – all the divisions we claim to have overcome. Every two to four years we separate ourselves by donkeys and elephants and I believe that were we all 39 year old purple-skinned Baptist republicrats, we would separate according to right or left-handedness.

Every election year bears witness to the parade of prejudice and paradigm that political campaigns seek to subvert to their own ends. It is an old story, but this year more than others I began to take it personally. This year I witnessed friendships end because of political party. I listened to an intelligent person question whether he should continue a longstanding friendship with someone so deluded as to support candidate X. I heard others questioning the character and the moral fiber of someone foolish enough to support candidate Y.

There are idealists and there are idealists and sometimes one or both remain intact all the way to Washington. History reveals, however, that once in office idealists and idealists become much more pragmatic. They discover that there exists an entrenched, hardened, well defended and well-funded network of business and bureaucracy and this network has as its only agenda the perpetuation of its own power. Ideals die quietly on the smoldering embers of corruption and compromise.

What the public fails to understand about government is that in the absence of vigilance and personal involve-

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.

ment in the political process, government becomes an entity greater than the sum of its individual parts. It becomes a lens that can magnify the intentions of the greedy and the fearful, an apparatus of absolute coercive power that continues to grow as it passes from hand to hand. What the voting public fails to understand is that the two-party false dilemma offers little real choice in practice, no matter what it promises on the campaign trail. No matter which party wins the presidency or controls Congress, government will continue to grow and we will continue in wage slavery to pay government's bills.

Business and bureaucracy will overcome differences of opinion to accomplish their collective goals. We can do the same if we can only realize that we have much more in common than our differences of political opinion. We all want to be safe in our homes. We want to enjoy a healthy environment. We want our children to be educated and/or trained to be able to be more successful than their parents. We want to be able to enjoy the good things of life without spending more than we make. We do not want government intruding into our personal lives.

To accomplish our goals we must be able to communicate effectively. Our nation has a longstanding tradition of political discourse, but it appears that many of us are losing the ability to discuss and disagree civilly if not amicably. This is due in part to the success of political campaigns in manipulating our thought processes in the same way sellers of soap play on our fears and desires. We are being manipulated, and when we begin to judge our neighbors because of their political opinions, we are playing right into the hands of our manipulators.

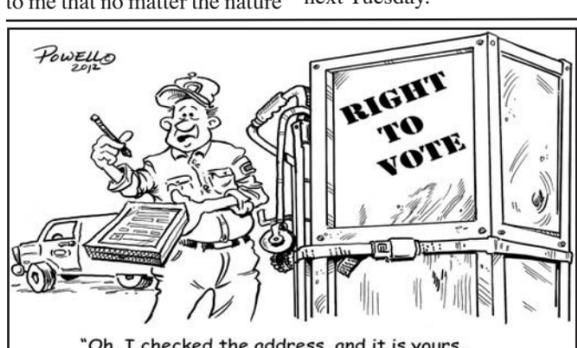


"IT'S ON MY MIND.."
Danny H. Parris

Holding forth

Thank the Lord that there are only a few days left until Election Day. Mind you, we need to be informed and seize the privilege to vote our conscience and our convictions. But I must confess that this is one presidential race that I will certainly rejoice to see come to an end. All of this holding forth has gotten to me. I am like Jeremiah the prophet, when he said, "...I am weary with holding in.." (Jer. 6:11) As I write this column, the third and final debate has ended. It has been difficult to hold one's emotions in check when both questions and answers seem to have been wrong. A question is asked, "Mr. President" or "Governor", "What is your solution to issue A?" Well, let me say, "I have a plan." Well, doggie; tell me what the plan is!! Next question, "Mr. President" or "Governor", "Since some of your constituents are for issue B and some are against issue B, what is your response?" Well, let me say as clearly as I can, "that indeed, some of my friends are for this issue and some of my friends are against it, but with great courage I want all the voters to know that if I am elected I am standing with my friends." I was holding my breath for a good question to be asked and a good answer given. It seems to me that no matter the nature

of the question, the respondent did not seek to answer the question, but used the question and all of his skill to make his opponent look bad. I wanted to jump up and say, "Hold your horses!" Wait! Stop! Answer the question! With all this holding forth it's becoming more difficult for me to hold my temper. I get all worked up and it becomes hard to hold my peace. My wife holds me in check most of the time. She says things like, "Hold your tongue" or you won't be able to "hold up your head" after this election. I must confess that I have a hard time "holding my temper" when I observe individuals holding the truth of God in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). No matter who our candidates are we need to hold their feet to the fire and let them know that all of their promises had better hold true. My problem with most political promises is that they cannot hold water. Most of them are just not sound nor valid and able to stand up to critical examination. All of us as citizens may not be able to hold a candle to those debating, but we had better hold up our end and be responsible for those coming behind us. We had better not hold still for the evil that holds sway over much of our world. Well, let me hold court by saying that the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand is still holding all things together (Revelation 2:1). If we don't choose the right leader you had better hold on to your hat (and probably shoes, shirt and pants). Let me put this column on hold until next Tuesday.



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

I hurt for Lance Armstrong. Everybody loves a champion, and he was one. Born in Texas in 1971, he early-on became a unique athlete winning running, swimming, and cycling championships while still a teen.

In 1996, at the age of 25, he was diagnosed with testicular cancer which spread to his abdomen, his lungs, his lymph system and finally to his brain. It was assumed by everyone but Lance that his career in professional sports was over. A year later in February, after aggressive medical treatment including numerous surgeries, the sports world heaved a collective sigh of relief when Lance was declared cancer-free.

Everything he had ever wanted as an athlete began to come to him. He was invited to become part of the U S Olympic Cycling Team. He won the World Championships and the Tour du Pont. For seven consecutive years, 1999 – 2005, he won the most prestigious cycling race of all, the Tour de France, the only person ever to do so. Multiple sponsors paid him six-figure incomes and he founded a highly successful foundation which would become Live Strong, and it continues to raise millions for cancer research.

Then it began to rain on Lance Armstrong's picnic. For

several years, rumors circulated about his alleged use of performance-enhancing drugs. He denied each claim but in 2012 the evidence mounted with lab results, copies of emails, records of monetary payments, and then the testimony of 26 people testifying against him, including eleven from his racing team. In June, 2012, the U S Anti-Doping Agency stripped Armstrong of his titles won from 1999 to 2005 and banned him from cycling for life. In part the charges said that Armstrong "...ran the most sophisticated, professional, and successful doping program that the sport has ever seen."

Like I said, I hurt for Lance Armstrong. I cheered his victories as I followed his career. I deeply admired his toughness to discipline his ailing body and make it do what few have ever done. I celebrated as one marathon he ran generated \$600,000 to help find a cure for cancer. But I don't think he was sleeping well at night. There was always this, "What if they find out..." cloud hanging around. And then one day they found out. The good Book says, "The way of the transgressor is hard." I hurt for Lance Armstrong. It helps me remember to talk to my kids about cheating.

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

Community Calendar

American Legion Post 23 meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30 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 7 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 Hiawassee 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 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.
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 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org
Bridge Players intermediate level meets at 12:45 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Recreation Dept.
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 mtnregarts-craftsguild.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/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.
We do Family Oral History of all of our residents. If you have not had your family history recorded and would like to do so, please call the Towns County Historical Society at 706-896-1060.
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.
GMREC Native Plant Garden Tours: Mondays 9 AM-1 PM. May-Sept. (except holidays). 706-745-2655.
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.
VFW Post 7807 will have their all you can eat fish fry on the 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month from 4:30 to 7 PM. \$9 a plate. See you there!
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 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 evenings at 7 PM at the Red Cross building (up the hill from the chamber office on Jack Day-ton 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.

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