

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

**To the citizenry:**  
*Hiawassee City Council Candidate Forum*

The candidate forum, held at the senior center on October 26, was well attended by concerned citizens of the city. The standing room only crowd at the senior center enjoyed spirited discussions on how to improve our city. There were four candidates present, including one incumbent. Three candidates, including two incumbents, were not in attendance. The *Towns County Herald* also was not represented at the forum. With over 100 citizens present, the forum was the major political event of the year in the city. Our elected officials and our only newspaper owe it to the community to be transparent and accountable to the citizens. How do we know what they stand for when they are not willing to interact and report to the citizenry?

The forum was co-sponsored by Towns County Homeowners Association and the Mountain Movers and Shakers. Both organizations are making their best efforts to ensure that the citizens of Towns County are informed and part of the decision making process for our future. The Towns County Homeowners Association currently has members attending all city and county meetings, interacting with public officials and expressing our opinions. We can make a difference, but it takes an active citizenry to be effective. Learn more about what we are doing to improve the community at [www.townscountyhomeowners.com](http://www.townscountyhomeowners.com). Membership applications are available on our website. We can make a difference working together.

*Noel Turner*

**President, Towns County Homeowners Association**

*Editor's Note: The forum would not have made the newspaper due to deadline issues. The Homeowners Association was alerted to that before the forum.*

### Letter to the Editor:

*Winners and Losers*

Winners: Hands down, the candidates for Hiawassee City Council elections and the first ever Candidates Forum for City of Hiawassee Council posts. There were three challengers and one incumbent who came to share their passion and hopes for Hiawassee. All had positive and constructive ideas as to how to move this 'special place' to a strong and sustainable future. In addition to the questions prepared by the Moderator, the candidates answered questions from the attendees who were the next big winners. Close to a hundred citizens braved the rain to meet the candidates, ask questions important to the community, and listen respectfully. They were not disappointed. And there were some tough questions!

Losers: The candidates who failed to appear; two incumbents and one challenger. Was this due to arrogance? So sure of the election results they didn't need to speak to their constituents in a public forum about issues? Or fear? Not being willing or able to address the tough questions and citizen concerns? The other loser was the *Towns County Herald*, our only source of local news. There was no reporter at the Forum, even though one had been requested. Now when did you ever have to ask a reporter to attend a political meeting? Certainly not in this county! The *Towns County Herald* is owned by the same individual who owns the *North Georgia News* and is managed by the same editor. The *North Georgia News* published pictures and a brief interview with all candidates for office in the Blairsville elections immediately after the qualifying deadline. A reporter for the *Towns County Herald* was asked if the *Towns County Herald* would do likewise for the Hiawassee candidates; he replied, "No, we are not going to run their campaigns for them." For the past few weeks, the *Towns County Herald* has been full of PAID political ads for five of the individuals running for office. It does not seem fair to the candidates to take their money and then not attend an important event that could affect the outcome of this election. The candidates and the community deserve better than this. I just obtained a copy of the *North Georgia News* dated October 28; again candidate pictures and election information... right on the front page!

Why are the citizens of Hiawassee treated differently by the *Towns County Herald*?

*Grace Howard,  
A concerned citizen*



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

**Q:** Dr. Don, my wife usually writes these kinds of letters, but I am the one who needs help this time. I think I'm a laid-back, easy-going dad, but my wife is really high voltage. Especially when it comes to the kids. If one of them does something wrong I just kind of deal with it low key, but my wife has a short fuse. If one of the children doesn't respond like my wife wants them to she really loses it. She doesn't throw things, but she starts yelling and makes life pretty miserable for everyone in the house. I want my home to be peaceful and my kids to feel loved, but if I bring up the subject with my wife she loses it with me, too. Do you have any pills to lower her voltage?

**A:** Unfortunately, I don't. But have you ever noticed how God loves to put people together who are opposites? If the man likes to be on time for appointments, inevitably his wife will dally long enough to be late. If she likes to keep things picked up, he likes to be able to find them where he took them off. If he likes to be careful about the family's spending, she loves to shop. I get the distinct feeling that God has a

sense of humor. Incidentally, you might want to give your wife this column to read.

There are times when you need to yell at your kids. If they are standing in the middle of a railroad track and a train is bearing down on them, for instance. But I can't think of many other kinds of situations where yelling is useful. Yelling at someone is a sign of disrespect, and the last thing we want to communicate to our kids is that we don't respect them. Even if there is a brazen disobedience the attitude we want to display goes like this: "I'm really surprised you did that because I know that's not the kind of boy you want to be." Punishment may follow, but we still want to be building a parent-child relationship that highlights the best in the child. Another thing that happens to even strong families is when mom (or dad) gets tired, doesn't want to hassle with the youngster so rather than taking the high road they take a short cut - and yell. Dad, how long since you and mom have taken a vacation, even a short one, without the kids. Better than a pill.

Send your parenting questions to: [DrDon@RareKids.net](mailto:DrDon@RareKids.net).

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

If we pay attention to the passage of time, we observe that change is inevitable. This is true whether or not we believe it or accept it, and the universe does not give even the slightest consideration as to whether or not we like it. We are constantly reminded of change. Seasons come and go. The stars move in the sky. Iron rusts and paint peels and even the familiar face in the mirror on some days stares back at us with the eyes of a stranger.

For the most part, we enjoy, and even demand change. We want what is "new and improved." Our fashion must be in style. Our software must be updated. We crowd into new restaurants in search of new flavors. We listen for new music and wait for new episodes.

It can be argued that some of us are even addicted to change. Our minds are restless and constantly moving in our search for gratification. We change jobs, friends, and partners. We shop; we consume. We seek but never find. We find, but are never satisfied.

Perhaps it is because we are wired to be explorers. For uncounted thousands of years we roamed the earth as hunters and gatherers, and long after we condensed into what we think of as civilization, there were still frontiers and uncharted realms to discover.

Now the frontier is gone and the uncharted realms, at least the ones we can look at on a map, are found on other worlds, beyond our reach. No longer can we set sail for a new world or load up a wagon with our possessions and head "west" in search of a new life. Our instinct for exploration and adventure is now, at best, limited to the pursuit of science and, at worst, confined, domesticated and corralled into consumption and instant gratification.

But this is only part of who we are. Along with the desire to explore and experience change, we are configured, in varying degrees, with the equally powerful instinct to resist it. We build monuments, nations and empires. We develop traditions. We seek immortality.

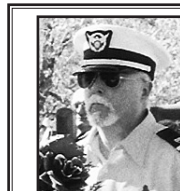
The goals of my own desire to resist change are somewhat less exalted than pyramid building. I am undeniably, unabashedly sentimental, and I must be in good company, judging from the number of antique shops I see from one end of the country to the other. Last week I spent several hours restoring an aged screen door that opens out onto the back yard of our old family home. It would have been easier and more economical to have sim-

ply replaced it, but no door that I could build or buy would have the same sound. The sound of that door punctuated my childhood, and when it slams, I am transported back in time to endless summers of back yard baseball and Frisbee, pine cone battles and watermelon seed spitting contests.

So instilled in my memory are the sounds of growing up in that old house that only recently have I accepted the inevitable and replaced the 58 year old gas furnace that "lived" in the basement. The new furnace is quiet. It is almost 40% more efficient and it is safer. But it does not have that comforting rumble that lulled us to sleep at night, that was the background noise for Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas mornings and that meant warmth and safety at home when the world outside was cold and frightening.

Scanning the headlines this morning I see headlines of thousands of refugees (there are indeed millions) who have no more options for resisting change, and I realize that sentimentality can be a luxury in this world. I understand the need to strike out into the unknown to preserve life and family, but I also understand the desire of those who seek to preserve their lifestyle and traditions against the rising tide of change. I want to grow weary of going to the mall in the town where I grew up and rarely hearing English spoken. I want to travel to new lands, but I want to come home to the enduring pyramid of memory and sentiment that takes a lifetime to build.

As is true for many things in this world of duality, we seek a balance. Change is necessary and inevitable. Tradition, memory and sentiment are also necessary, for no ship ever set sail without an anchor.



## The Veterans' Corner

By  
*Scott Drummond,  
USCG Veteran*

### 11th Hour of the 11th Day of the 11th Month

Veterans' Day, 2015 will be a very special series of events. Beginning, as always, at our small but beautiful Towns County Veterans' Park, we will have our opening ceremonies and a special guest speaker, Colonel Charles A. Cunningham, USAF from Murphy, NC. Afterwards the presentation of all our Vietnam Veterans' Certificates of Honor will be conducted by Colonel Walter A. Shumate, USA. This year, our second year of our very active Monument Committee will present and honor fifteen more family members of Towns County Veterans who passed away and whose names are permanently inscribed upon the wall of honor.

We will then proceed with the traditional laying of the Wreath, followed by one of our nation's ultimate hymns, "God Bless America." A huge debt of gratitude is owed to Pam Leslie and our Towns County Schools Band for their participation. We hope those young Americans realize what a blessing they are to all of us, Towns County, thus America.

Following our benediction and Taps our Towns County first responders will lead a motorcade of Veterans, families and guests to our new recreation center for an indoor ceremony leading to the unveiling and dedication of our Iwo Jima Memorial sculpture, beside the flagpole. Our two remaining Iwo Jima Veterans, Bud Johnson and Todd Kimsey will be present for a wonderful presentation. Thank you, Mr. Kendall for your efforts on behalf of this artistic representation of one of our nation's pivotal and costly events, one of many necessary sacrifices

for freedom and liberty paid in full, during WWII by those who knew our entire world was in peril. "God and Country" was not and is not just some trendy phrase for our men and women of this generation who, at great sacrifice, committed themselves to something far larger than personal wants and needs. Anyone attending should plan on staying, after the indoor program for the final presentation. It will be a heart rendering event to remember.

Please take note, in case of rainy weather, our entire Veteran's Day ceremony will have to be moved indoors at the new recreation center.

Originally known as Armistice Day commemorating the end of WWI on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918, erroneously called the "war to end all wars", this day officially became Armistice Day in 1926. Then a national holiday in 1938. Shortly after WWII a Veteran named Raymond Weeks organized National Veterans day to celebrate and honor all Veterans on this day. Congress passed the Veterans Day bill in 1954, approved by President Eisenhower. President Ronald Reagan awarded the Presidential Citizens Award to Raymond Weeks in 1982, for his part in pursuing this national recognition of our nation's Veterans. Congress attempted to change the date of Veterans' Day to the fourth Monday in October in 1968, but this was never recognized and was officially "changed back" to the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1978. Not war, but peace and freedom we celebrate, and those who preserve it.

*Semper Paratus*



"I'm sure you kids won't mind paying off a few trillion more."

## 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!  
**VFW Fish Fry** April - October on 2nd & 4th Fridays each month from 4:30 - 7. \$10 per plate.  
**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 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. at new Senior Center. Newcomers welcome. Questions please contact the T.C. Dem's at [Townscountydemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:Townscountydemocrats@gmail.com).

**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. Sat. morning breakfast 2nd Sat. of each month from 8 - 10:30 AM. \$6 adults, \$3 12 & under.  
**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 old Rec Center in Hiawassee at 5:30 p.m. 706-896-1060, [www.townshistory.org](http://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 & Crafts Guild** meets 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Calvary Chapel on Hwy. 76 in Hiawassee. All local artists and crafters are welcome, for information call 706-896-0932.

**Mountain Computer User Group** meets the 2nd Monday of each month. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. Details can be found at [www.mcug.org](http://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](http://www.ngatu692.com).

**Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)** meets the 3rd Monday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call Gary at 706-896-4308 or visit [www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains](http://www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains).

**Alcoholics Anonymous**: meets every Friday and Sunday evening at 7 at Red Cross Building at 1293 Jack Dayton Circle. 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.

**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.

**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 PM at the Shrine Club, Industrial Blvd., Blairsville.  
**GMREC Garden Tours** every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

**Shooting Creek Basket Weavers** meets 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For more info [www.shootingcreekbas-](http://www.shootingcreekbas-)

**ketweavers.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 Ct., 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.

**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 AI 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.

**The Board of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce** meets 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 at 706-835-6721 or Marilyn at 706-897-4367.

**Mountain Coin Club** meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the North Georgia Tech campus in Blairsville. Guests are welcome. For more info, call 706-379-1488.

**Monday morning BINGO** at Brasstown Manor every Monday morning at 9:30 a.m. 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Players meet in the Bradford. Questions 706-896-4285.  
**Towns County Lions Club** meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Daniel's Restaurant, 273 Big Sky Drive, Hiawassee.

**Towns County Herald**  
*Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County*

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