# DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

### **Letters to The Editor**

### Editor:

It seems to me that, rather than being so obsessed with casting lots (a Biblical reference) as to the division of the SPLOST monies, the respective community leaders ought to focus more on bringing jobs to the area. Have you seen the overwhelming numbers of vacant stores and businesses from the east to the west and the north to the south of Towns County? Let's do the math as to how to improve really and significantly revenue locally:

Jobs (especially permanent ones) = income = spending = tax revenue for all three SPLOST claimants = more and better services from each claimant at less cost to us, the taxpayers = we ALL are better off.

Claudos G. Spears

### To the Editor:

The Towns County Board of Education's plan to raise property taxes by 16.36% is the worst decision of the decade and must not be allowed to stand. The reason for their budget deficit is clearly revealed by a review of programs and staffing. Over the years when the system was flush with money from the SPLOST and other revenues, the board failed to plan for "rainy days" when revenue would be less. Instead they splurged and added favorite programs and staffing far beyond the needs of a good quality education for all of the county's children.

When considering just one of these, athletics, it's hard to see how students have either the time or energy to attend to academic matters because they are so busy playing games. In this small high school we are paying for an athletic director, 12 coaches and 15 assistant coaches and the middle school is similarly staffed, although competitive athletic programs commonly benefit only a small fraction of the student body. Furthermore, other components of the system including the superintendent's office, maintenance, food services, academic support and faculty have similarly generous staffing.

The property tax is a grossly unfair way to fund education because it places a disproportionate burden on older citizens who have no children in the system, many never did.

Bill Kendall helped some by limiting runaway assessments to a maximum of 3% per year. I believe the BOE should be limited by this same rule.

Furthermore, the Board needs to make some sound business decisions and immediately reduce or eliminate discretionary spending not directly related to academic achievement to attain a sustainable budget.

Therefore, I strongly urge taxpayers to attend hearings on November 14th at 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the BOE office and voice their concerns. WE MUST STOP THIS IRRE-SPONSIBLE ACTION!

Wm. Ronald Gibson



Did you ever learn anything from a marshmallow? You did if you remember the famous experiment done with a group of 4-year olds nearly fifty years ago. The kids were put in separate rooms, each with a small bell and a plate it. The researcher told them

However, the most fascinating part of the study came twenty-five years later. The same group of youngsters were studied, now nearly 30-years old. The outcome was a surprise. A higher percentage of those children who had been with a single marshmallow on unable to delay their gratification turned out to have had higher rates of behavior problems, both at home and at school. They had not done as well scholastically, nor in their relationships. By contrast, those who had been successful in waiting till the researcher returned to the room thereby winning a double measure of marshmallows were more likely to have done better in school, had a higher sense of self-worth, lower incidence of drug use, fewer credit problems, and more satisfaction in relationships with both genders. Learnings: One of the ways we can contribute to our children's success in life is to help them understand that while short-term compromise may look attractive, deciding to go with a bigger goal generally brings greater rewards. They will find that insight useful when they begin making decisions about drugs, sex, integrity, and choice of friends in the days ahead. Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@ RareKids.net.

### The Middle Path

by Don Perry

This morning we are and though our attention spans venturing into murky waters, a kind of Bermuda Triangle of fact and interpretation where the compass spins and the stars are obscured by clouds. Though it may be difficult or even impossible to navigate, the fishing is excellent and all manner of strange creatures can appear in the nets.

There are many vessels in which we attempt to navigate the unknown. There are the tall-masted schooners of religion: slow, ponderous, regal with tradition and luxuriantly outfitted by the generosity of its passengers. There are a variety of small to medium-sized craft built from spirituality and mysticism and the sea floor is littered with the wreckage of many of the more poorly-captained boats. Science launches ice-breakers and research vessels and many an unfortunate vessel from its port lies rusting on the bottom of the ocean, broken up on the rocks where science theory meets science fact.

We are fascinated by the unknown, and we fear it - and we are obsessed with attempting to chart its waters. As a society we may have even lost our ability to appreciate the voyage, so intent, as many of us are, on knowing the precise time we will arrive in parts unknown. An entire industry of talkers and typers has grown up around predicting everything from the outcome of a ball game to the number of votes every candidate will receive to the temperature and humidity two weeks from next Thursday.

The undiscovered country we are navigating today is the year 2012, and though we are running out of days upon which to speculate, in many ways we are just as "in the dark" about how the year will end and what it all means as we were in January. This is probably true for every year, but an unusual number of vessels were launched to explore this particular turning of the calendar. This year a number of theories were floated on apocalypse and Armageddon. Some said the world will end. Some said that it will change by epic proportions in a kind of "rite of passage" for our civilization.

It is hard to find a middle

## are short we might still remember the storms, the floods,

the droughts and the extremes of weather we saw in 2012. A truth was revealed to many this year and that truth is that the climate is changing - that climate always changes - and that climate is no respecter of where and how we choose to live. Another truth revealed by our journey into the unknown is a truth which may be apocalyptic to many who want to believe that a silent majority still exists in this country of conservative white people clinging to the values of Mayberry. As it turns out, the country is less like Mayberry and more like Gotham City than they thought. Those vessels who believed otherwise have run aground and the ones who hoped otherwise are taking on

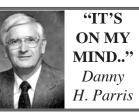
water. An old truth was redis-

covered this year, one that is as

hard as bedrock, and that truth

is that in the end, demographics

always trumps politics. Many vessels will sail on into 2013 in full regalia, celebrating the populist victory of Barack Obama and believing that hope and change will safely guide them into the future. We hope they are right. We also believe that the waters are still treacherous and in some places infested with sharks. This has always been true of the ocean. For the many thousands of waterlogged, camping out in their own homes, waiting for government help that will never come, the truth that government is no more capable after Sandy than it was after Katrina will be an inconvenient truth. For minorities hoping for a job or an ever increasing government handout, the truth that government is an obscenely bloated parasite that will give only enough to ensure its own survival – can only give by taking from somewhere else – will be devastating. For all of us there is another truth that we ignore at our own peril. That truth is that no matter who is elected to appear to pilot the ship of state, there are many hazards beneath



Life's foundation stone

There can be no "government of the people", "by the people", and "for the people" unless the people are right. That means that the foundation must be built upon truth. I have believed, still believe and will always believe that God is the source of all truth and that He gave the Ten Commandments through Moses for His people, Israel. Israel had been in slavery for four hundred years. If they survived as a nation they had to live life based upon God's commands. Our nation was likewise founded upon God's laws and if we survive we must live life based upon truth. God did not say to Israel nor to America "here are a few ideas that I want you to check out to see if they meet with your approval." What He said was, these are commands and if you live by these commands, life will work out, if you don't, life will fail. I believe there are absolute truths that are the same for all generations. The Psalmist said, "For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations" (Ps. 100:5). Truth is truth period. I feel like gagging when folks say, "Oh", What may be truth to you, may not be truth to me." Or those who say, "Oh" "You are too narrow-minded, you must be tolerant and accept other people's views." "You mustn't hurt anyone's feelings." In my estimation, one of the most dangerous threats to America's freedom and future is to teach

our children to accept error, falsehood and deception without any questions. We will doom and damn this generation if we do not teach them to probe, analyze, dissect, question and be relentless in seeking and searching for the truth. There are those in high places (that deserve a low place) that have attempted to rewrite our nation's history and have attempted to change God's laws to make truth be what ever they want it to be. There are people in our generation who have become so open-minded that all of their brains have fallen out of that open space and say, "Oh", truth is what you want it to be." We need to wake up as individuals and start doing some research, and seeking truth from the right source rather than listening to a bunch of crackpots and potheads.. If we do not start thinking for ourselves the next generation will look like a bunch of department store manikins (or womanikins) and robots that are incapable of thinking or having any freedom unless someone higher up is pulling the strings. Truth does endure to all generations. There are no politicians, no high court judges, no religious bodies: Baptist, Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Church of God, Assembly of God, Catholic, etc; that can change God's truth for their generation. We may not like the truth; it may convict us, hurt us, embarrass us, ridicule us, condemn us, separate us, and imprison us and a thousand other things. However, if you do not accept God as absolute truth you will never be free and you will never have a future. He that forsakes the truth of God forsakes the God of truth! (Romans 2:25)



"Sometimes it's a fine line between being green and being lazy!"

that any time they wished they could ring the bell, the researcher would return and they could eat the marshmallow.

However, if they didn't ring the bell, but waited for the researcher to come back into the room on his own. they would get to eat two marshmallows. As you might guess, many of the kids tired of the wait, rang the bell and ate the marshmallow. However, to the great surprise of those conducting the experiment, many of these 4-year olds were able to wait even when the researcher was out of the room for fifteen minutes or more.

The entire process was filmed, and it's a fascinating study in childhood behavior to watch the kids struggle with the temptation. Some distracted themselves by doing something else, like singing, or turning their backs to the treat. But some picked at it, smelled it, or pushed it around the plate with their fingers. One boy turned the plate over and covered the marshmallow so he couldn't see it.

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

KENNETH WEST	PUBLISHER
CHARLES DUNCAN	EDITOR, ADVERTISING
SHAWN HENRIKSON.	COPY EDITOR
LIBBY SHOOKS	TAFF WRITER, PHOTOGRAPHER
JOE COLLINSS	TAFF WRITER, PHOTOGRAPHER
ADAM GILREATH	ADVERTISING SALES
LOWELL NICHOLSON	I.NEWS,SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHER

#### **OFFICE LOCATED AT 446 NORTH MAIN STREET** "THE MALL" HIAWASSEE (706) 896-4454

Publication Number 635540. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. EMAIL Address: tcherald@windstream.net

#### **POSTMASTER: Send change of address to:** TOWNS COUNTY HERALD P.O. BOX 365 HIAWASSEE, GEORGIA 30546

DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWS COPY & ADVERTISING Fridays at 5 PM SUBSCRIPTION RATES **TOWNS COUNTY (1 YEAR) \$15 OUT OF COUNTY (1 YEAR) \$25** 

The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All subscriptions must be paid in advance

path on an ocean of uncharted waters, but our own research vessel has logged a number of interesting observations about this interesting year. We do not have time or space to recount them all, but several do stand out as remarkable. For many, it has indeed been a year of apocalypse, a fact to which many in the northeast can attest,

### **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 ED-**ITOR 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.

## **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!

the surface, and there are not

enough lifeboats for all of us.

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 Com*mission* 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 Hiwassee 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. We do oral family histories of residents. 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 mtnregartscraftsguild.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/blueridgemountains. 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 Aux*iliary* 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.

**Prostate Cancer Support Group** meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 5-6 PM in the Cancer Freatment 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 eve-nings at 7 PM at the Red Cross building (up the hill from the chamber office on Jack Dayton Circle).

Caregiver support group meets 2nd Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m. at Brasstown Manor, lo-cated at 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-4285 for more info.

Valley Square Enchanted Dance Club. Dances 2nd & 4th Fridays at Hiawassee Senior Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch. Call 706-379-2191.