

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

### Letter to the Editor:

Dear Sheriff Clinton,  
We are writing you to give a big thank you to Deputy Jay McCarter.

On Friday night, November 13, we were approaching our vacation home and discovered there was a car blocking the road. We were quite concerned and afraid, because we did not recognize the car, nor did we know who or what might be in the car. We backed out of the road and called the Towns County Sheriff's office.

Within a few minutes, Deputy McCarter arrived, and we explained the situation to him. Deputy McCarter approached the vehicle and was able to determine that the car was apparently abandoned. Deputy McCarter called a tow truck, which he led to the abandoned car, and had it removed.

Deputy McCarter then went to our home and went inside to see if the people that abandoned the vehicle may have been inside our home. He walked through our home looking for anything that may be out of order.

When he left our home, he went to our neighbor's house to see if anything was out of place surrounding their home as well.

We want you to know how much we appreciate Deputy McCarter's dedication and support. As we typically come to Young Harris on weekends, and our house remains unattended during the week, it was quite concerning to us to arrive and find an abandoned car blocking the road to our house. We did not know what might await us at our home. Deputy McCarter was very professional and supportive, both in having the abandoned car removed, as well as going inside our home to verify that everything was safe.

Please express our appreciation to Deputy McCarter.  
*Roger and Michele Peterson*

### Letter to the Editor:

Just one night after the horrific events in Paris that left over 120 people dead, the Democrats had a debate at 9 p.m. on a Saturday night. And, of course, questions were asked about foreign policy. And the answer offered up by Bernie Sanders was very interesting. Bernie Sanders, the wild haired former flower child, opened Saturday night's Democratic debate by vowing to rid the world of ISIS, the terrorist organization that claimed responsibility for killing more than 100 people in Paris. However, in a follow-up question, moderator John Dickerson recalled that during the debate just last month, Sanders had identified "climate change" as the greatest threat to national security. "Do you still believe that?" asked Dickerson. "Absolutely," replied Sanders. He added that "of course international terrorism is a major issue that we have got to address today," but argued that "climate change is directly related to the growth of terrorism." Sanders warned that global warming could cause international conflicts "over limited amounts of water, limited amounts of land to... grow crops." Does Sanders have a point? I think not. It's quite possible that at age 74 those bongs have damaged Bernie's brain. There's simply no other way to explain a guy thinking that climate change is a greater danger to American security than the Islamic State.

*Tim Groza*

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

A good bit of travel has led your humble scribe into the holiday season this year. I sat in traffic, darted through crowds, smelled bad air and ate bad food. I left the television and the radio on far too long for background noise and sadly, the "nightly shooting report" is pretty much the same in every city; the talking heads speak in the same cadence, and now this, raise their eyebrows on the same syllables.

The brain is a system that compiles data, averages the input and attempts to draw logical conclusions from the results. When you travel around this nation, you begin to realize just how much of that data is the same, everywhere you go. Like Hillary Clinton on the campaign trail, the data changes its accent, depending on where you are, but the message, as it is interpreted by my limited brain, seems to be the same.

The voices of media, which strive always to become the voices in our heads, seem to be saying this: They want us to be very concerned, even afraid, of the latest enemy, the one that has been in the headlines blowing things up lately. The man on the television and the woman on the website want us to have a strong opinion about this. We have two options. We can go all-in on the fear option, despise foreigners, hate Muslims and drop an iron curtain draped with American flags around the nation. Or we can choose the Pollyanna option and open the borders to one and all, embrace diversity, take a stand against white privilege and all forms of microaggression, hold hands and sing kumbaya while we watch our traditional values being replaced by someone else's.

Right. Be concerned. Pick a side, any side, as long as we are positional. Got it. Now, what next? Well, the voices say that, no matter what our position is on the latest emergency, there is only one thing to do, and that is to shop. If we are afraid, then the best way to fight terrorism is with Black Friday. Or if we intend to embrace change, then the best way to take a stand against fear and hatred is, you guessed it, shopping. Shopping tells the world that our way of life is not negotiable. It shows the bad people (both the terrorists and members of the other political party) that we are not afraid. It comforts us and fills the empty spaces.

Truly, you cannot find a

### 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. My 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.**

middle path between the horns of a false dilemma, and by the way, you cannot fill an empty heart or a barren soul with discount items. This holiday season, the voices will just have to wait. The one sure path that I can see beyond the dilemma, is the path of Gratitude.

Gratitude fills the heart; it cultivates the soul. I'm grateful to come home to a place as peaceful and as beautiful as the one in which we live. I'm grateful for the fresh air that rolls down from the mountain and for the sparkling water in the brook. I'm grateful for the quiet that settles on our valleys in the evening, for the stars that shine so much more brightly here than they do in the city. I'm grateful for our community of friends and relatives and the mountain traditions that have survived the generations. I'm grateful to be able to walk safely through our small towns and be known by face if not by name in so many places we might go.

Gratitude is a simple, practical method of overcoming all forms of negativity. It does not require us to do anything first. When we choose to be grateful, the regrets of the past and the fears of the future evaporate, for gratitude allows us to live in the moment.

That's how we can silence those voices. Gratitude centers us and allows us to get our bearings. Gratitude allows us to see things more clearly and to decide what is real for us, no matter what the voices might say. Fortunately for us, when you live in a place such as this, gratitude is easy. All we have to do is choose.



## The Veterans' Corner

By  
Scott Drummond,  
USCG Veteran

### Koh Tang

May 12, 1975 was yet another blemish on American political leadership. Certainly not on these Marines: Lance Cpl. Joseph Hargrove, Pfc. Gary Hall and Pvt. Danny Marshall, of the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, from Okinawa on a rescue mission. Why are the names of these young men important? Because they were left behind thus murdered by the Communists of the Khmer Rouge forces. Forty and one American servicemen, including those three Marines gave their lives in this ill-advised operation only two weeks after the fall of Saigon. "Left behind" simply is not in our USMC vocabulary, but was forced upon them by political orders issued from on high. Sound familiar?

Our detachment of Marines, after being overrun on the island of Koh Tang by Khmer Rouge and possibly recruited (?) Cambodian forces, were duly evacuated, but were promised they could regroup and go back for their brothers the next day. A primary reason for abandoning the 14 hour fire-fight was based upon learning that this "rescue mission", was unnecessary due to the fact that the crew of the SS Mayaguez had been released. This entire mission was ostensibly for rescue of the "captured crew" of the U.S.-flagged merchant vessel SS Mayaguez, on route from Hong Kong to Thailand with a cargo of food, clothing and medical supplies, when the Khmer Rouge opened fire and hijacked it in international waters about 60 miles southwest of the Cambodian port of Kompong Som near Poulo Wai island, according to official government documents. National Security Council docu-

ments reveal, President Ford and his cabinet were advised that the crew of Mayaguez may've never even been on the island of Koh Tang prior to issuing orders for this "rescue mission" considered to be the final battle of Vietnam, and often referred to as the "Mayaguez incident". Nevertheless, Ford received a bump in his polling data afterwards?!

Mystery still surrounds the ship, its cargo and intent. Flying no flag, it was about two miles from Cambodian territory, leaving Saigon nine days before it fell, the captain destroying a secret code upon capture, according to a 1981 article in the *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review*, written by University of Houston legal scholar Jordan Paust. According to Paust and his lawsuit the true contents of its cargo have never been released.

As often occurs, our American citizenry, much less our best of our finest fighting forces are not always privy to truth and facts. Perhaps, maybe, at times those reasons may bear validity, but certainly with great rarity and honest explanation afterwards! What we, as Americans should know and never, ever forget, is that our men and women of all our military forces are never willing to quit, and are in fact, the very reason we still exist as America. Our political class is often to blame for blunders leading us into these horrific tragedies.

Our military forces would prefer to avoid war and battles if possible and are certainly not to blame, as happened very often during the Vietnam Era.

*Semper Paratus*



## RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Some questions are easier to answer than others.

**Q:** Dr. Don: Our 12-year old wants to go to a sleep-over with some of her friends next weekend. Shall I let her?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Dear Dr. Don: We have a 7-year old who wants a smartphone because all of his friends have one. Shall we get him one?

**A:** Flip-phone, OK. Smartphone, Not.

**Q:** Dr. Don: At what age do you think children should start being responsible for chores?

**A:** Three.

**Q:** Dear Sir: We want to begin potty training our 30-month old little girl soon. What is a good age to begin?

**A:** Six months ago.

**Q:** Dr. Don: My husband and I have read your column for years. Do you still believe that tattoos are wrong?

**A:** Never said that. Wrong is a

moral statement. My position is, Not wrong; dumb.

**Q:** Dr. Don: Do you think my kids get the same value out of church if I send them as they would if I take them?

**A:** If you send them they miss the crucial part, that you believe it's important.

**Q:** Do you believe in spanking?

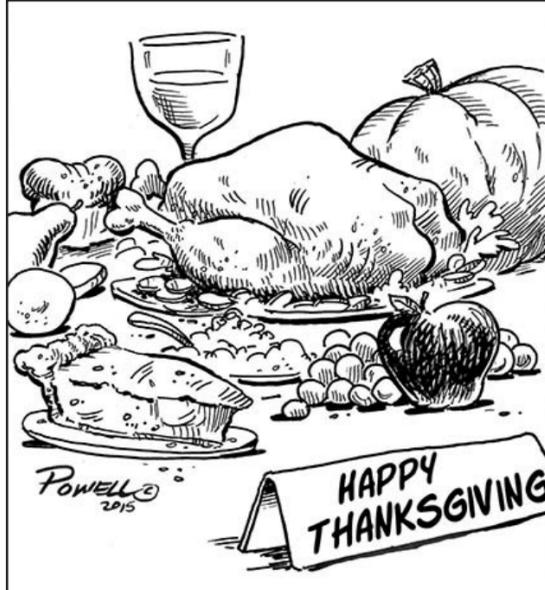
**A:** Some children; some circumstances. Not often. Not in anger.

**Q:** Dr. Don, sometimes you talk like someone who has never had children. If you do, how are they turning out?

**A:** Two adult sons, two adult granddaughters, four precious great-grandchildren. You'd love 'em all.

Like I said, some questions are easier to answer than others.

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



## Let us give thanks...

...and pass around the blessings!

## 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 Townscountymdemocrats@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 Unicorn Masonic Lodge #259** meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

**Stevens 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

**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.mcutg.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 Gary at 706-896-4308 or visit 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-

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 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.

**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** meets the second Monday of every month at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office, 1411 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris.

**The Doyling 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.

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Contact the  
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706-896-4454

## Towns County Herald

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