

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

Trying to make Christmas magical for kids

This week I am pleased to announce that we are preparing for our annual effort to assist local families with children who would otherwise do without this Christmas. Each year we begin with the Sheriff's Christmas parade. This year's parade will be this coming Saturday, November 30, and will leave from the fairgrounds at 5:30 p.m. Participants are asked to bring a new, unwrapped gift for a child age 10 and under. Additional donations are encouraged and appreciated. Those who wish to participate are encouraged to contact the Towns County Sheriff's Office to let us know of your intent, so that we can have an idea what to prepare for.

If anyone reading has a need or knows of a family that has a need this Christmas, the Towns County Sheriff's Office will begin receiving names from parents this coming Monday, December 2. You may call our office at 706/896-4444 to have children added to the list.

Each year this effort is made possible through the support of individuals and citizens who donate toys or money to purchase toys for this cause. Without their support, this would not be possible. If anyone would like to help, they may do so by donating new, unwrapped

toys at the following locations: Towns County Chamber of Commerce located on Jack Dayton Circle, Towns County Sheriff's Office located at the Towns County Courthouse, 48 River Street, Hiawassee, or the Towns County Detention Center and Operations Headquarters located at 4070 State Highway 339 (Crooked Creek), Young Harris. Money can also be donated at the courthouse and detention center locations. Checks should be made out to TCSO Empty Stocking Fund.

This is the seventh year that I have had the privilege of being involved in this effort. Each year the need has exceeded the previous year. With the economy in the state it is in, I would expect that trend to increase. There have been times in the past years that we have grown concerned that we would not be able to meet the need, but each year the community has proven its love and concern for these children and I am asking once again for your support.

Over the years, like so many other persons in public safety, I have witnessed and dealt with a number of horrible and horrifying events. The thing that has always broken my heart is the fact that the children are most often the ones who, through no fault of their own, suffer the consequences. As a child and even at 45 years old, Christmas has always been the most magical time of year. I believe that is the case for many and why we, as a community, are so committed to providing for these children. All donations to this cause go directly to benefit children of Towns County. Thank you for your continued support of this effort.

Muscle Cars & the FFA preparing future generations

The Chestatee Chattahoochee RC&D mission is to support local people to improve their lives and economic status and there is no better way to do that than to help young people grow up to be responsible adults. I tell kids that they need to become responsible because I want a replacement when I become un-responsible. In spite of what we thought when our kids were growing up and doing things that we didn't understand (or pretended not to), most of them actually grew up and made us proud, as we did for our parents in spite of our misdoings along the way.

When I think back about things I did growing up it makes me cringe and to think of what my two boys probably did makes me not want to think about it. When they got older they would tell me things that I suspected, but didn't want to know. When my two sons were in high school in the 90s, we restored muscle cars from the 1960s and we had some of the fastest and most powerful classics such as: 1969 Chevelle SS396, 1968 HO350 Firebird, 1966 Chevy II SS, 1967 Chevy II SS, 1967 GTO, 1969 GTO Judge, and an original 1967 Camaro that was bought new by a little lady from South Georgia. My boys also had my grandfather's 1958 Jeep pickup that I drove in high school so they never lacked for something cool to drive. They were supposed to drive the Jeep to school since my insurance agent would pass out if he knew that my 16 year olds were driving to school in a big block, 4 speed muscle car, but the Jeep never seemed to have gas so they just had to drive the Chevelle to get to school (the bus was never an option). I heard in later years about drag races they had with my friend's son in his 1965 Oldsmobile 442.

These car projects bonded us while they were growing up, but there is an organization that really influenced them more than anything and gave them the kick start that they needed to go from foolish kids to responsible young adults, although my youngest made me wonder if the kick was hard enough to get him started, but he finally got cranked up and now does very well.

Many groups pull at young minds to try to turn them down a new road to try radical ideas or go off on some wild tangent, but the organization that is the best out there to influence kids is one that has been guiding young people into adulthood since 1928, the FFA. "Future Farmers of America" was founded by a group of young farmers

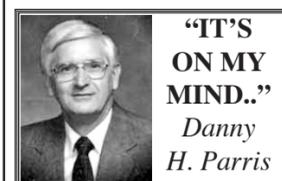
Executive Director of RC&D



back in 1928. Their mission was to prepare future generations for the challenges of feeding a growing population. They taught us that agriculture is more than planting and harvesting-- it's a science, it's a business and it's an art. FFA continues to help the next generation rise up to meet those challenges by helping its members to develop their own unique talents and explore their interests in a broad range of career pathways.

So today, we are still the Future Farmers of America. But, we are the Future Biologists, Future Chemists, Future Veterinarians, Future Engineers and Future Entrepreneurs of America, too. The letters "FFA" stand for Future Farmers of America; however, in 1988 the official name of the organization was changed from "Future Farmers of America" to "The National FFA Organization" to reflect the growing diversity of agriculture. Many of us were FFA members and have fond memories of those times when we were searching for who we were going to be when we finally grew up, and the FFA gave many of us the nudge that we needed to make us who we are today. Support your local FFA chapter and FFA Alumni groups anytime you can because the kid you help today might just be your replacement tomorrow!

For more information on FFA and RC&D projects, contact Frank Riley, Executive Director, Chestatee Chattahoochee RC&D Council at www.frank.crcd@gmail.com.



"IT'S ON MY MIND.."

Danny H. Parris

Give thanks to the Lord

Each year Thanksgiving seems to be more difficult to observe. In fact, it is almost crowded out of our holidays. Secular society puts the squeeze on Thanksgiving. Halloween gets more popular each passing year and commercial Christmas promotions are in place before Halloween is celebrated, leaving almost no official time to give thanks. Because there exists such a tremendous anti-Christian resentment in our nation, some people are intimidated about giving thanks. They are confused. Who do I give thanks to? The great pumpkin! The pilgrims! They are like the little fourth grader who stood before the class to give a report concerning the origins of the thanksgiving holiday, He said, "The pilgrims came here seeking freedom of you know what, when they landed, they gave thanks to you know who. Because of them, we can worship each Sunday, you know where." Charles Colson told about a Thanksgiving a few years ago, when he asked his eight-year-old grandson why the pilgrims celebrated Thanksgiving. His reply, "Because they were thankful." Colson went on to ask his grandson "to who were the pilgrims thankful?" He said, "I suppose they were thanking the Indians, that's what we learned at school." I hope you know to whom we ought to give thanks and that you aren't afraid to call His name. His name is JESUS. It is absolutely disgraceful that a lot of our young people don't know the true story of Thanksgiving. The pressure is being applied for our nation to forget and remove God from receiving any thanks from anyone. I am reminded that on April 30, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation for a national day of fasting, humiliation and prayer. The proclamation read thus:

"We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten the gracious hand, which preserved us in peace, multiplied, enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to God that made us! It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and pray for clemency and forgiveness."

God is offended when we fail to acknowledge and give Him praise and thanks for all things! A dear lady's husband had died and she went to the newspaper to have his obituary printed. The editor informed her the price would be 50 cents for each word. She said, "Fine." "Put it like this: "Fred Brown died." The editor knew the poor lady was trying to be thrifty but he had to tell her there was a limit of seven words. He said, "You must have seven words." "In that case", she said, "Put it like this: Fred Brown died, 1983, pickup for sale." There are places to be thrifty but when it comes to thanksgiving God wants us to be loud, vocal and extravagant.

Pumpkins and pilgrims have their place but it is wise and right to give thanks to Almighty God (Psalm 92:1-2).



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Q: Our 6-year old keeps talking about the zany things he wants to be when he grows up. For instance he's small for his age but yesterday he wanted to be a basketball player. He isn't doing well in his first year of school but today he is talking about being a doctor. How can we get him pointed in the right direction?

A: It would help me if you would define "right direction." Do you mean his or yours? I hope you don't mean yours because you will do him no favors if you decide what he should become and then try to shape him into your dream. However, if you're looking for his choice of a direction, he doesn't have a clue either.

A university registrar friend once told me that only half of all freshmen students have decided on a major field of study, and of those who have decided, half of them will change to another major before they graduate. And these freshmen are not 6 or 7, they're 18 or 19. So the likelihood that what interests your little athlete/doctor today won't even register on his radar a decade from now.

And there's an upside to this changeability thing. When he tells you he wants to be a

professional bungee-jumper or own a fireworks factory, those urges will no doubt pass, as well.

So what to do? First, play his game. Childhood is a time to dream, even crazy dreams. So water his dreams. Tell me why you'd like to be a doctor. 'Cuz doctors help people. Y'know, one of the things I like best about you is that you like to help people. That's all. Don't try to talk him out of it -- or into it. Don't talk about the years of schooling and the long hours, those are non-issues to him right now. He's not choosing a career, he's dreaming out loud. Mom and dad are dream-enhancers.

Second, give him opportunities to be around good people. Often a youngster shows interest in a subject because he is impressed by someone who works in that field -- a doctor who's been kind to him, a teacher who takes interest in him maybe. Remind him that God has a plan for his life and that you know he'll find it. Chances are good that what he admires now is not what he will become as an adult. Or tomorrow.

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

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.



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 Democratic Party meets the 2nd Thursday of every month at 5 PM at the Senior Center.

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.

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 Unity 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 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 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 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.

Georgia Mountain Writers Club meets at St. Francis of Assisi Church the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 AM.

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 evenings 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, located at 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-4285 for more info.

Enchanted Valley Square 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.

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 706-996-9614 after 6 PM.

Towns County Herald
Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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OFFICE LOCATED AT 518 N. MAIN ST. SUITE 7
"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
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