

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## The Myth of Small Decisions

It started as a casual conversation between two old friends at their weekly coffee meetup. Between sips of their preferred brew – one black, one with enough cream to make it barely recognizable as coffee – they stumbled upon a truth that extends far beyond their corner booth at the local diner.



Echos from Sinai  
"Torah for Everyone"  
Rabbi Yonatan Hambourger

"My wife handles all the little stuff," one friend declared with a self-satisfied smile, "while I focus on the big things." His companion's raised eyebrow prompted elaboration. "She just manages the budget, pays our bills, makes decisions about major purchases, and plans for our retirement," he explained, stirring his coffee with studied nonchalance.

"And what exactly do you do?" his friend inquired, already struggling to suppress a knowing grin.

"Well, I contemplate the really important stuff," came the reply. "Like whether pickleball is actually better for my knees than tennis, if aliens built the pyramids, and whether my neighbor's new bird feeder is attracting too many squirrels to our block."

This exchange, while humorous, mirrors a perspective that many people hold about life's bigger picture. It's remarkably easy to convince ourselves that we're focusing on what truly matters while overlooking the actual foundations that support our daily existence. We often relegate the seemingly mundane details to others – or assume they're beneath notice altogether – while we occupy ourselves with grand philosophical questions or entertaining distractions.

Consider how this plays out in the spiritual realm. Many people of faith maintain a curious disconnect in their worldview: they believe in an omnipotent force capable of orchestrating magnificent events – natural wonders, historic moments, unprecedented coincidences – yet somehow doubt this same force would concern itself with their daily challenges, hopes, and decisions. It's a mindset that separates life into convenient categories: the meaningful versus the mundane, the significant versus the trivial.

This tendency to dismiss life's details shows up everywhere, from spiritual beliefs to business leadership. Consider Richard, a successful business owner who always prided himself on "seeing the big picture" while delegating the details to others. A health scare forced him to pay attention to the small daily choices that ultimately shaped his well-being – what he ate, how much he moved, when he rested. He came to understand that these "minor" decisions were, in fact, the very substance of life itself.

The truth is, life doesn't actually divide neatly into "big stuff" and "little stuff." Each moment connects to the next in an intricate web of cause and effect. The daily choices we make – how we treat others, manage our resources, care for ourselves – create the foundation for everything else. Just ask any financial advisor: it's not the occasional windfall that typically builds wealth, but rather the consistent, thoughtful management of regular income and expenses.

Margaret, who recently celebrated her 50th wedding anniversary, puts it this way: "People always ask about the secret to a long marriage, expecting some grand revelation. But it's not about the big romantic gestures or how you handle major crises. It's about all the small moments – how you speak to each other over breakfast, whether you remember to pick up their favorite snack at the store, if you really listen when they tell you about their day."

This perspective invites us to reconsider what we classify as significant. The Almighty operates not just through dramatic interventions and major events, but through the subtle interplay of countless small interactions and choices. True wisdom lies in recognizing the profound importance of life's seemingly ordinary moments.

For those seeking deeper meaning in their lives, this understanding offers a powerful shift in perspective. Instead of waiting for big moments or dramatic signs, we might find more satisfaction in embracing the sacred nature of daily life – in recognizing that every interaction, every decision, every moment carries weight and meaning.

The next time you're tempted to dismiss something as "just the little stuff," remember the man in the coffee shop. While he pondered life's entertaining diversions, his wife was quietly shaping their future through attention to the very details he'd overlooked. In the end, perhaps there is no little stuff – only building blocks of different sizes, all essential to the structure of our lives.

*Yonatan Hambourger is a rabbi and writer dedicated to serving spiritual seekers of all backgrounds on behalf of Chabad of Rural Georgia. Tzali Reicher is a rabbi and writer who supports communities throughout the regional South. You can contact them at y@tasteoftorah.org.*

## 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.

## Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!  
Contact us at 706-896-4454  
Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 4 PM



## Snakes

As the temperatures continue to rise, plants are blooming, leaves are expanding, and life is rustling in woods again.



Some of the life includes snakes. I've already heard a few stories of encounters that people have had with snakes early this spring. Snakes are a natural part of the landscape that we're going to have to learn to live with. So, it's not going to be possible to completely eliminate all encounters with them. There are some things that you can do to make those encounters less frequent and safer for you and the snake.

Most of the snakes that live in Georgia are non-venomous. There are 46 species of snakes in Georgia of which 6 are venomous. Of those 6, we have 2 of them in Union and Towns counties. Copperhead and Timber Rattlesnake are the 2 that we have in our area.

Copperheads can grow to be 4.5 feet long. They are usually light brown with dark brown hourglass shapes on the back. The narrow part of the hourglass is along the spine with the wide base on either side. They are mostly found in forested areas. They like spots with logs, leaf, and rocks for cover. They are capable of living in suburban areas with people around.

Timber Rattlesnakes can grow to be about 5 feet long. They have a color range from yellow to black. Their backs are covered in brown or black chevron shaped crossbands. They like to live along wooded streambanks. They like old debris piles, old burrows and rock crevices. They will also have the iconic rattle on the end of their tail.

Most people will talk about being able to tell if a snake is venomous from looking at the shape of its head. Generally speaking, venomous snakes will have a triangular shaped head. However, this can be difficult to determine in the wild without getting close and handling the snake, which is never advised. Non-venomous snakes can flatten their heads and appear to have more triangular heads too. Some of the markings on non-venomous snakes can be confused with copperheads.

To lessen the chance of having snakes around your home make sure that your dryer vent is covered with a screen to prevent snakes from wandering inside. Remove piles of debris, leaf piles, or wood piles, because those create habitats for snakes. Thick ground cover like tall grass or ivy can create hiding spots for snakes or the rodents, frogs, and insects that snakes like to eat. Keeping the space around your house clear will decrease the likelihood of a snake being present.

Most of the time people are bitten when they try to kill a snake. Non-venomous snakes are protected by state law. If you are bitten 1) stay calm; 2) Get competent medical help as quickly as possible; 3) Keep the affected limb level with the body; 4) Do not cut, suck, or apply ice or a tourniquet to the wound. Wear closed toed shoes when walking in areas where snakes might be present.

There are no chemical poisons or effective repellents for snakes. Mothballs are not registered for use as snake repellent. They also can't hear, so any kind of repellent that uses sound isn't going to work. Make sure that the area around your house is kept clear and your house is sealed to that snakes can't enter your home.

If you have any questions about snakes please contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

## Letters to the Editor

### A Fantastic Idea

Dear Editor,

Abolishing the U.S. Department of Education is one of the most brilliant ideas conceived by the present administration in Washington. Making this move will be beneficial for students, teachers and families across the country.

By returning education to the states, student loans will be more accessible, civil rights will finally be enforced and low-income students will receive the resources they need. Abolishing this monstrosity will ensure millions of students will not be left behind.

Since public education is a right for everyone, rich and poor, abolishing the Department of Education will ensure all of America's students receive the best education available. Students with disabilities will receive proper support, Title IX provisions will be enforced again, and funding for schools and students who need it most will be available. Failing to abolish this department years ago has been a catastrophic mistake.

It's important for all of us to contact Senators Ossoff and Warnock and Representative Clyde to ask that they vote post-haste to abolish the Department of Education. It is crucial for our children.

Thank you,  
Gary Meier

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor  
P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546  
Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net

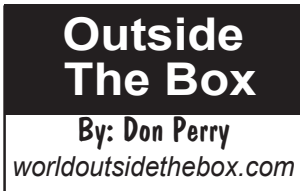
Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should 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.*

The Towns County Herald is an independent and non-partisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articles covering local events, etc.

## Your Link Has Expired

The more complex things become, the more vulnerable to disruption they are. So say systems theory, economics, and philosophy. The effect is observable in ecosystems, supply chains, and financial systems. It's in the touchscreen controls of the washing machine that stopped working. It's in the package that's always running late for delivery. It's in the one I'm sending back today.



The online order history says "brown." The receipt in the box says the same. The item in the box is so white it glows in the dark. Apparently, the vulnerable link in my supply chain was the guru in the warehouse who pulled the order.

Preparing to return the item is itself an exercise in complexity. First, I need to check my email to get the order number. Email requires a login. A username and password are no longer secure enough, so I need third-party verification. The email client wants to send me an email to verify that it's really me trying to check my email. Fortunately, the email address for verification is different from the email address I'm attempting to check for my order number.

When I attempt to log in to the alternate email address to retrieve the code to verify it's me attempting to log in to the primary email address, the alternate email address wants to send me an email with a code to verify that it's me, or it will send me a text.

Yesterday, I worked in the garden and moved heavy rocks into and out of the bucket on the tractor. The work is not complex, but it is the kind of work that makes calluses which confuse the delicate and complex fingerprint reader on my phone, which forces me to remember the combination to the safe where I keep the security code to open the phone to receive the text which contains the code that proves it's actually me trying to check my email. The code has now expired.

This is an improvement over the dark ages before our phone carrier worked out how to get Wi-Fi calling to function on the phones they sold us. We have no cell service where we live, not a single bar. The phone company kept trying to sell us a signal booster until we convinced them there was no signal to boost.

In any event, when the bank would send a text with the code used to verify that it was really me attempting to log in to check my balance, I would hop in the truck and drive 3 miles to the church parking lot, which we affectionately refer to as "cell phone hill," where one bar of signal strength was sufficient to retrieve the text. It's the only available signal for miles, and the little church gets more traffic during the week than it does on Sunday. After retrieving the text with the code, I would drive back home as quickly as possible, wake up the computer, and enter the numbers. Of course, by then, the code had expired.

Back to the effort to gain access to my email to retrieve the order number to return the package. Having Peaches warming my toes while I'm wrangling the laptop adds another layer of complexity to the operation. She likes to wrap around the back of the screen and gaze at me to remind me there are better things we could be doing. Apparently, her chin depressed the Caps Lock key, which resulted in multiple attempts to log in to my email with my all-caps password and hard-fought third-party verification code. I've been temporarily locked out of my account. They want to send me an email with a link to reset the password. Peaches is right. This project can wait until tomorrow.

Since I wrote the first part of this story, I updated the fingerprint scan with my calloused fingers so I could open my phone without having to resort to the tedious process described above. Meanwhile, Tracey kept coming at me with one of her many lotions to remedy the roughness. I'm usually able to stay out of her reach, but she got me while I was sleeping. My hands are smooth again, and now my phone no longer recognizes my fingerprint.

I think I'll just drive to Walmart and return the package there.

## Towns County Community Calendar

|  |   |          |
|--|---|----------|
| <b>First Monday of each month:</b>     | School Board... HS/MS Media Center          | 6:45 pm  |
| <b>Every Tuesday:</b>                  | Storytime for Children... TC Library        | 10:30 am |
| <b>First Tuesday of each month:</b>    | Hiaw. City Council... City Hall             | 6 pm     |
|  | YH City Council... YH City Hall             | 6:30 pm  |
| <b>Second Wednesday of each month:</b> | Board of Elections... Elections Office      | 4 pm     |
| <b>Third Monday of each month:</b>     | Planning Commission... Temporary Courthouse | 6 pm     |
| <b>Third Tuesday of each month:</b>    | Commissioner's Mtg... Courthouse            | 5:30 pm  |
|  | City of Young Harris Planning Commission... |          |
|  | Meeting Room in City Hall                   | 5 pm     |
|  | TC Water Authority Board Meeting            | 6 pm     |

## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

**Kenneth West**  
Owner/Publisher  
**Derek Richards**  
Advertising Director

**Shawn Jarrard**  
General Manager/Editor  
**Jordan Hyatt**  
Office Manager

**Todd Forrest**  
Staff Writer  
**Lowell Nicholson**  
Photographer

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$30. Out of County (1 Year) \$40. 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. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 3 "The Mall", Hiawassee  
Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net  
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546