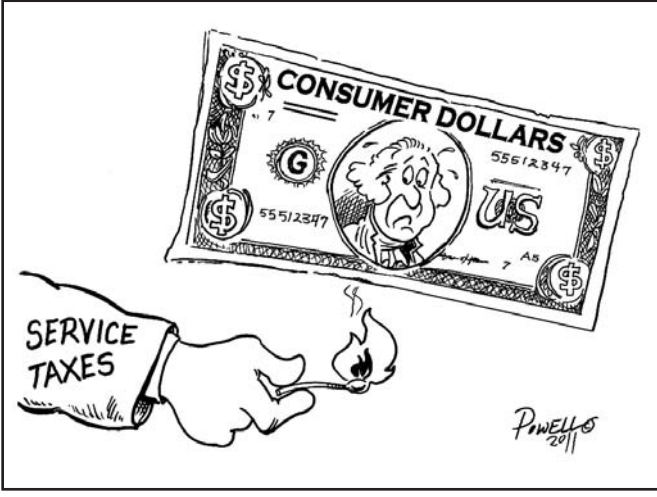


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Recently, my wife and I attended the Charlie Daniels concert at the Georgia Fairgrounds in Hiawassee. We attended numerous concerts throughout the years. Although Charlie was great, as expected, the sound system once again was a significant disappointment.

Each concert we attend, the music is too loud while the performer's voice is too quiet. Many times, it is almost impossible to hear the performer. This was true with Charlie Daniels, and earlier concerts.

It is hard to say if the acoustics of the hall are to blame, the sound system, or the individual(s) handling the system. However, for the cost of the tickets, we should be able to HEAR THE PERFORMERS THROUGHOUT THE CONCERTS!

Although we thank the Georgia Fairgrounds for providing high quality performers, it is only fair to expect a high quality sound system so that we can hear the entertainers. Please, whoever is responsible for managing the arena, please have this matter handled so that we can fully enjoy future concerts.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Christopher D. Mazur

Dear Editor,

So far I have earned the rank of Life Scout in Troop 125 in Hiawassee. My troop is sponsored by the Hiawassee Methodist Church. I wanted to express my appreciation.

First of all, I want to give a big thanks to the Hiawassee Methodist Church for the scout hut they built five years ago. Both the Boy Scouts and the Cub Scouts meet in the scout hut. Many members gave their time and money to build the scout hut. My second thank you is to the Methodist Men's Club. They work closely with the Boy Scouts. For example, they conduct the Advancement Board of Reviews and help to finance the troop. They have helped in many ways. The church has also helped Boy Scouts that couldn't afford to go to summer camps.

I am working on earning my Eagle Award and I believe attaining this award will help me in the future a lot in the career part of life. Scouting has also taught me how to keep pressing on and never quitting.

If there are other boys interested in Scouting, we meet at the scout hut next to the Hiawassee United Methodist Church, the church on the hill west of GA Mountain Fair, at 7 PM on Tuesdays.

Carsten Judd, Boy Scout Troop 125



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
By Don Jacobsen

Q: Dr. Don, can you help us with this. When we got married I had two children and my husband had one. My kids act up when they are with him and this kids act up when they are with me because they know that their real parent isn't there to do the discipline. What can you suggest?

A: You may think my suggestion is radical but let me tell you that here is how blended families work best: when you and your husband were married it is no longer "her kids" and "his kids." It is now "our kids." Both of you become the "real parents" - to use your term. The new relationship of husband and wife has created a new family and all three of the kids are part of that family. Authority for all the kids rests on both parents.

One of the basic premises of a strong family is that the most important relationship is between husband and wife, not between mother and kids or dad and kids. The bedrock of the family is husband/wife. This creates a strong core that pro-

vides management and authority for the rest of the family.

Sometimes when a man marries a lady with children, he is placed on the outside of the parental authority circle altogether and all the discipline rests on mom. Wrong. How are the kids going to learn how a healthy family functions if dad is forced into the background?

The husband and wife team, even in a blended family like yours, is the core, the strength, the authority structure of that family. This is not mom and her kids on one side and dad and his kids on the other. Mom and dad are mom and dad of all the kids now.

I suggest an after-dinner family council - tonight - with all present. The brief presentation goes like this: "Mom and I have not been doing this right. As of right now both of us are the parents of all of you. That's how well-run families work. That's how our family works."

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

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Six thousand miles away on the other side of the globe today, the brave nation of Japan struggles to overcome a catastrophe. The death toll is horrific. The damage to the infrastructure of Japan and to the Japanese economy is incalculable. I am compelled to express admiration for the level headed bravery with which they are facing this disaster. Invariably when a power blackout occurs in one of our largest cities, looting also occurs. Nothing of the sort has happened in Japan. We have something to learn from the Japanese.

Meanwhile, the media machine which makes its living speculating, inflating and inflaming is finding a receptive audience among many of us already primed by apocalyptic visions of 2012 and end-times expectations. This morning we will attempt to inject some fact into the hysteria. First of all, despite the frequency with which the word "meltdown" is being used in the headlines, it is highly unlikely that a large release of radiation will occur.

The power plants at Fukushima are boiling water reactors and of a completely different design than the reactor made famous in the disaster at Chernobyl. The Fukushima reactors are fueled by uranium oxide encased in zircaloy, which is an alloy of zirconium and other metals designed for its high absorption of neutrons. These encasements are the fuel rods of the reactor and they can withstand a temperature of 3992 degrees F. before melting. The fuel rods are contained in a pressure vessel made of steel. The entire assembly of reactor hardware is positioned over a thick "core catcher" of graphite and concrete and enclosed in an air-tight third containment of very thick steel. The core catcher is designed and tested to completely contain a total meltdown of the fuel rods and the pressure vessel without releasing any of the nuclear fuel into the environment.

The explosions which have happened at Fukushima were not "atomic" explosions. The nuclear material in a boiling water reactor is simply incapable of producing the kind of explosion which happens in an atomic bomb. These were hydrogen explosions most likely caused by water heated to a temperature where its molecules separate into hydrogen and oxygen - 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. 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.


very explosive mixture.

Radiation has certainly been released into the environment outside the reactor, but it will not pose a danger to the west coast of America as has been speculated in some attempts to sell advertisements on websites. Radioactive cesium and iodine are produced as a byproduct of the nuclear reaction inside the fuel rods. When the fuel rods begin to melt, the cesium and iodine isotopes mix with water inside the pressure vessel and will be present in small amounts in any steam vented from the pressure vessel. Radiation is also produced outside the fuel rods when neutrons produced by the nuclear reaction interact with water or air inside the pressure vessel. When steam is released from the pressure vessel to avoid rupture, it contains N-16, an isotope of Nitrogen which becomes non-radioactive in seconds, and it contains small amounts of radioactive cesium and iodine which disperse to join the background radiation we all receive daily, due mostly to above ground nuclear testing done decades ago.

We will move now from fact to interpretation. Many of us are not big fans of nuclear power. Personally, I see it as a reluctant necessity in the long transition from fossil fuels to a solar based energy infrastructure. Up front, a nuclear power plant does much less damage to the environment than even the newest coal burning power plants. In fact, Scientific American reported in 2007 that "the fly ash emitted by a power plant—a by-product from burning coal for electricity—carries into the surrounding environment 100 times more radiation than a nuclear power plant producing the same amount of energy." It is the highly toxic and dangerous spent nuclear fuel that must be transported across long distances and stored for thousands of years which becomes a growing problem for a short-sighted species living on a geologically active planet.

Those of us looking for signs of the end of time will have to look elsewhere than the horrible disaster being faced by the Japanese people. More to the point, there are some for whom every disaster, every earthquake, every hurricane is a sign of impending doom; this, despite the lack of any reliable evidence that there is a definitive increase in any of the normal processes of a dynamic planet.

The thing that has changed, the essential factor in any "disaster equation," is the number of people living on this earth. We are crowding every corner of the globe, along fault lines, in flood plains, in coastal areas susceptible to hurricanes and tsunamis. When there were fewer of us, we could choose to occupy areas less susceptible to danger. Hundreds of millions of the poor have no choice and no mobility. Those of us who do have a choice, choose for short term convenience or gratification and then act as if we have been personally offended when the earth does what it has always done.



"IT'S ON MY MIND.."
Danny H. Parris

Water-Walkers

The late, Dr. Louie Newton (sometimes called "Mr. Baptist"), pastored the Druid Hills Baptist Church in Atlanta for many years. He wrote a daily newspaper column for *The Atlanta Constitution*. It was entitled "Good Morning", and first appeared in January of 1936. It was published in *The Savannah Morning News* and *The Columbia Evening Ledger*. In one of his columns written between 1936-38, he penned these words: "The world is passing through turbulent days-days that try the souls of men. Looked at from a purely human viewpoint, these conditions would be too much for us, but when we remember that "This is our Father's world", when we remember that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose", when we remember that "He standeth in the shadow, keeping watch above His own" - when we remember these blessed truths, our hearts are strengthened to face life and bravely do our part." These are good words for us today in the midst of our turbulence. Turbulent, stormy days call for some water-walkers.

Last week I wrote about the disciples in the storm (Matt. 14:22-33) and only Peter was willing to risk getting out of the boat to walk on water. In my opinion, the majority of our leaders are hesitant "to get out of the boat." This includes a lot of preachers, politicians and top leaders of our nation. The boat is a safe place - don't rock it. It is the secure place. It is the safety zone for future elections, secure retirements and perks. What these folks don't realize is that boats do

sink - even Titanics. I am sure when Peter put his foot outside the boat to walk on the water to Jesus, that the other disciples probably said some things like: "if you have any sense you will stay in this boat", or "who does he think he is?" or "Peter's just a show-off!" or "You can if you want to, but don't expect me to go with you!" None-the-less Peter ignored the criticism and made a decision to leave a perfectly good boat and become a water-walker.

Too many of our leaders are afraid of criticism. I, for one, am fed up with the boat load of right leaders and the boat load of left leaders. For God's sake, America's sake and the world's sake won't some of these leaders bail out of the "right boat" and the "left boat" and show some boldness and courage in real leadership? You will say, "But Peter sank!" "No", he started to sink but he did walk on water for a while. He, of all the disciples had the experience of walking on water which strengthened and conditioned him for the days ahead as he participated in the birth and infancy of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even if you sink it does not mean that you are sunk.

We desperately need some leaders who will aspire to be water-walkers. It is not only leaders but it is high time that the grass-roots people of our nation aspire to be water-walkers. Someone has said "if we always do what we have always done, we will always be where we've always been." I would say if we continue to do what we have been doing things are not going to improve but will get worse. It is the desperate moment in our history that leaders and people alike need to call out as Peter did, "Lord save us!"

We know that man can't because of his sinfulness, weakness and limitations, but with God all things are possible. God help us!

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