

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

"Wow! Clamping down on illegal immigration didn't take so much work after all!"



Nationwide Prescription Drug Take-Back Day

The Towns County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) and the Appalachian Drug Task Force (ADTF) will partner together to participate in the nationwide prescription drug "Take-Back" initiative that seeks to prevent increased pill abuse and theft. ADTF, which also consists of the Lumpkin County, Union County and White County Sheriff's Offices, will be collecting potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs for destruction on Saturday, April 30, 2011 from 10 AM – 2 PM at the Towns County Jail. This service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

This initiative, headed by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Most people are not aware that medicines found in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. The rates of prescription drug abuse, accidental poisonings, and overdoses are increasing throughout the United States at an alarming rate. The DEA warns that the majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including the home medicine cabinet. In addition, they warn that most Americans do not know how to properly dispose of their unused or unwanted medication, often flushing them down the toilet or throwing them away; both potential safety and health hazards.

Young people often perceive prescription drugs to be safer than illicit drugs to get high, leading them to casually share these drugs with friends. These include painkillers (OxyContin), depressants (Xanax) and stimulants (Adderall and Ritalin). In 2009, 76% of drug related deaths were caused by prescription drugs compared to 13% caused by illicit drugs such as cocaine or methamphetamine.

The DEA reports that everyday an average of 2,500 teens use prescription drugs to get high for the first time. According to the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an average of 5,965 persons per day in 2008 abused prescription pain relievers for the first time. The total number of individuals that initiated with a controlled substance pharmaceutical (pain reliev-

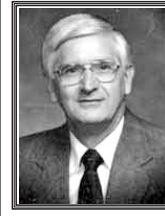
ers, stimulants, tranquilizers, and sedatives) for the first time exceeded the number of individuals that abuse marijuana for the first time. The majority of teens believe that prescription drugs are easier to obtain than illicit drugs.

"Prescription drug abuse is a rapidly growing drug problem, and this take-back event is an invaluable tool that we can use to reduce the threat of drug abuse that these prescription drugs pose," said ADTF Commander Mitchell Posey. "The partnership with the community is key in our efforts to reduce prescription drug abuse and misuse."

Collection sites in every local community nationwide can be found by going to www.dea.gov. This site will be continuously updated with new take-back locations. There are two websites that will help explain the dangers of prescription drug abuse; www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com for parents and www.justthinktwice.com for teens.

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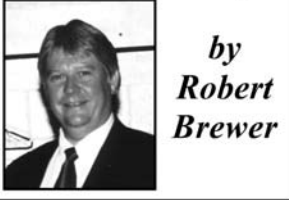
**"IT'S
ON MY
MIND.."**
Danny
H. Parris

Have you heard the rooster crow?

I grew up around chickens. My older brother's hobby was raising chickens and he raised a variety of them: Rhode Island Reds, Dominiques, Games, White Leghorns, and Bantams. There were lots of crowing roosters around our house. The crucifixion and resurrection always reminds me of crowing roosters. I hope you don't think I am unspiritual for saying that. In Mark's Gospel, the Lord had predicted that Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed twice (Mk. 14:30). Sadly, Peter did fulfill the Lord's prediction (Mk. 14:72). Do you think that Peter ever had a taste for fried chicken anymore? Every time he heard a rooster crow he must have wanted to weep. Once, while serving Southside Baptist Church in Griffin, Georgia, we had gathered for an Easter sunrise service in the back parking area. Just as the sun was rising I began reading the resurrection story and suddenly there was the sound of several roosters crowing. That sunrise service is indelibly etched in my mind. It seemed that everyone present felt like Peter – that we too, had denied our Lord. I personally identify with Peter. Over the years I have heard the rooster crow. At the age of sixteen, when I initially gave my heart to Christ, I, in a manner of speaking, heard the rooster crow. In that revival meeting a Cherokee Indian, Sam Walkingstick, was preaching God's

Word when I came under deep conviction of my sinfulness and loss. During the invitation I went forward to receive Christ as my Savior. Over a period of undisciplined living I strayed from that commitment. Again, I heard the crowing of the rooster. In a cottage prayer meeting I rededicated my life to full-time service to God. Over the course of the 72 years of my life, when I have failed, I HAVE NOT FAILED TO HEAR THE ROOSTER CROW. The crowing of the rooster did not signal the end for Peter, rather it only reminded him that human flesh is weak and will fail you. Furthermore, it demonstrated that no matter what you do God still loves you and wants to restore your fellowship with Him. When we fail, we normally don't pursue Him. He pursues us. Mark records in his gospel (16:7) the command to the women who arrived early at the tomb to discover He had risen, Jesus said, "Go tell His disciples – and Peter." He especially said to tell Peter. The crucifixion, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus give hope to every sinful soul. From Genesis to Revelation reveals one continuous pursuit of God for fallen humanity – Adam and Eve in the garden, Abraham in Egypt, Moses on the backside of the desert, Elijah in a cave, Jonah in a whale, Zacchaeus under a tree, Matthew at the tax office, the Prodigal in the pigpen and Paul on the road to Damascus. He pursues you today in your addictions of alcohol, drugs, sex, pornography, religious deceptions and hypocrisies of all forms. He pursues us wherever we are. I am thankful for a resurrected, living Lord who pursues dead humanity with everlasting life. Have you heard the rooster crow lately?

Extension Tips



by
Robert Brewer

Do you want to have the "yard of the month", but don't want to buy all those landscaping materials and waste resources? Here are 5 ways to save some green and still be green!

Join a garden club: Want free plant cuttings? Then swap yours with other local gardeners and share their cost-cutting secrets. Also consider starting or joining your area's Wild Ones Natural Landscapers Ltd. chapter, a group that rescues native plants from building and road construction sites (www.for-wild.org). Adopt these orphans and transplant them in your own beds.

Stretch your perennial budget: Split clumps of your mature perennial plants to make an inexpensive ground cover. Replant the divisions to enjoy more summer blooms. This neat trick also works well with peonies, black-eyed Susans, Autumn Joy sedums and more.

Find free mulch: Your town may have a compost facility that accepts grass clippings and tree prunings. Check the site frequently for free hardwood chip mulch, rich composted soil, and discarded trees. Tree stumps can be used as plant stands, and when they've served their duty, split them up into firewood.

Reduce your lawn size: Reduce the amount of grass you have to mow by creating larger plant beds instead. You'll save expensive gas or electricity, and the environment will thank you for reducing the use of fertilizers and potentially harmful pesticides. Don't feel bad for the neighborhood kid that earns money mowing lawns – put him to work planting flowers!

Pay for less water: Collect free rainwater in large barrels. Place them at the bottom of downspouts and water your plants with the bounty. Or bring your garden right to the source! Dig a shallow pit, 10 to 20 feet around, at the base of your downspout. Plant New England aster, red milkweed, gayfeather, and nodding wild onion among rock formations to catch the runoff.



**RARE KIDS;
WELL DONE**
By Don Jacobsen

Some of my readers took issue with a recent column in which I talked about parents coming down hard on issues of dishonesty in an 11-year old. Maybe I should say just a bit more about that.

Honesty is a corner marker in our relationships with each other. Trust is an absolute, non-negotiable in families, at school, at work, wherever people are together. There can't be love without trust. There can't be business without trust. There can't be any stable relationship without trust.

There was a day in this country when a handshake was as binding as a written contract. When that trust goes out of a culture that nation begins to decay. The traits of honesty and integrity are most effectively instilled when children are young. That's a priority on every parent's to-do list.

Years ago we were moving to a Christian university where my wife and I were going to be teaching. The school provided four students to assist with unloading the van. Late that afternoon \$40 disappeared off the kitchen counter. I had no idea who had taken it but it could only have been one of the four students and I felt it ought not to be ignored so I called the Dean of Students' office. Within ten minutes the Dean was at our front door.

As the students were leaving he took them aside and calmly told them that he knew one of them had taken the money. He said he was going to his office and he was requesting that the one who had stolen it should come there in the next thirty minutes and make the matter right. If not, he would investigate until he found out who it was and that student would not only be barred from that university, but would never attend any other school in that system either.

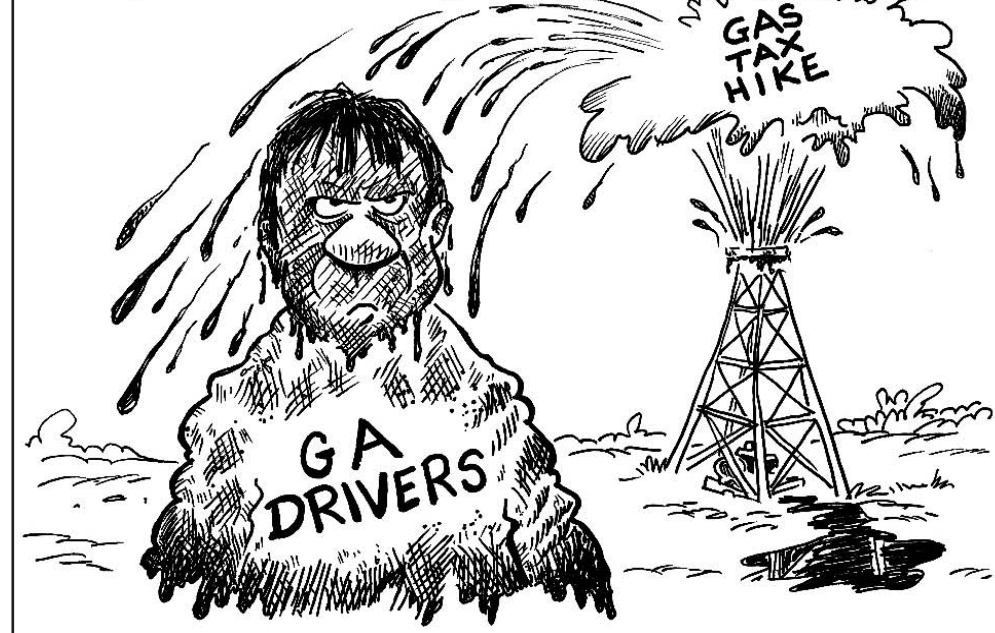
Fifteen minutes later the Dean called. One of the students had confessed to taking the money and had returned it. The student had been suspended for the balance of the summer session.

I asked the Dean if he didn't think his response to the incident had been a bit heavy-handed. "Yes," he replied, "intentionally. If at 18," he went on, "a student doesn't understand the value of integrity then we need to do something to get his attention." The student returned in the fall and graduated four years later with an honorable record.

Some things in a youngster's life are not open for negotiation. Integrity is one of them.

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

POWELL
2011



Community Calendar

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 2 p.m.
Towns County Democratic Party meets the 3rd Thursday of every month. Please call Kim Bailey at 706-994-2727 or 706-896-6747 for details.
Towns County Republican Party meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Daniels Steak House. Dinner at 6 p.m., 706-896-7281.
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 Hiwassee River Valley Kennel Club meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st Monday of each month at Brother's Restaurant on Hwy 64 in Murphy, NC. Call President Kit Miracle: 706-492-5253 or Peggy Moorman: 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 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 1182, Hiawassee, GA 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org
Bridge Writers intermediate level meets at 12:45 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Recreational Dept. Call Eden at 706-896-6921.
Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, located at 308 Big Sky Drive (behind the Holiday Inn), Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m. & the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Contact us by calling 706-896-0932, mtnregartsandcraftsguild@hotmail.com.
VFV Post #7807 Fish Fry will be 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, 4:30-7 p.m., \$9 a plate, all you can eat.
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 on the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church office at 706-745-2469 for more information.
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 6 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Lee (828) 389-0924.
We do Family Oral History of all of our residents. If you have not had your family history recorded and would like to do so, please call the Towns County Historical Society at 706-896-1060.
Fall Storytime at Towns County Public Library Thursdays at 1 PM.
Prostate Cancer Support Group meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 5-6 PM in the Cancer Treatment Center Auditorium in Blairsville. For more info call Steve 706-896-1064.
Mountain Coin Club meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Blairsville Civic Center. Doors open at 5:30. Program and auction begins at 6:30. For more information, call Ye Old Coin Shop, 706-379-1488.

Towns County Herald

Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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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 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.