

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:
 My husband and I would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to the Towns County Herald and to Don Perry for the article he wrote, "The Middle Path", June 1, 2011. His words conveyed our thoughts and feelings so completely regarding the wars our country has so sadly inflicted on Iraq and Afghanistan for the past decade. The deaths of thousands of our men and women and the hundreds of thousands of deaths of Iraqi and Afghan men, women and children is heart-breaking, unconscionable and has accomplished little other than having created untold increases in the number of people who now hate the U.S. We are not safer in any way, shape or form. In fact, we are an even greater target today, due to the death and destruction we have caused. It's been a tragic waste of lives and has left our country in economic ruin.
 Thank goodness for some voices of rationality, compassion and truth, such as Don Perry.

*Sincerely,
 Paula Berkeley*

OUCH! I'm Being Gouged!
 On June 9 we began a 2,000 mile round trip through parts of GA, NC, TN, VA, PA and NJ. When we left Union County, the common price for a gallon of unleaded gas was \$3.77 and the best \$3.69. Before arriving in Asheville, we saw advertised prices of \$3.57 in NC where prices are commonly 15-20 cents higher than GA. We filled up in VA at Exit 150 (I-81) for \$3.34 and refilled there on the return for \$3.32 and in TN for \$3.37. In PA we paid \$3.57 and in NJ where full service is prescribed by state law, we paid \$3.50. As I considered these sizeable variations, all far less than at home, I concluded that because we live in an isolated area, gas station owners here are slow to get the word that crude oil prices are declining. Then I remembered that we have the same communication systems, technologies and devices as all of those other states. I also recalled that our station owners quickly learn of price increases in the crude oil futures market and immediately adjust their pump prices accordingly. So I am puzzled about why we are paying so much more for gas, especially why we are paying more than Buncombe County, NC. Do you know why???

Wm. Ronald Gibson

To all of my customers that have become my friends and family,

I would like to express my gratitude towards each and every one of the Ingles customers that I have served over the past fourteen years. I have had the great blessing of watching your children grow, graduate and some of you becoming parents and grandparents. I looked forward to seeing your smiling faces, the stories you told and the jokes that made me laugh. Hiawassee is filled with a bunch of incredible people that I now call my friends and family. I will miss each of you greatly and will keep you in my heart forever.

*Thanks with love,
 Doug Green*

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
 By Don Jacobsen

Q: Dr. Don, my 5-year old follows me around the house all the time, won't play by herself and constantly insists that I watch her whenever she does something like a little dance in the middle of the floor or even ties her shoes. What can I do?

A: Welcome to the world of the 5-year old. Not the one that should be, perhaps, but the one that is. Time to add a new word to your parenting vocabulary: boundaries.

Between years two and three mom and dad need to begin to help her highness realize that the universe does not revolve around her. Up till that time it did - it had to, just to keep her alive when she couldn't tell you her needs. Mom and Dad (primarily mom) assumed the role of indentured servants. There are not many daylight hours when the toddler is out of their sight.

But "the terrible two's" constitute the great divide when she needs to learn that the world is not there to serve her. Parental leadership begins and so do chores. Making her

own bed (with help at first), putting her dirty clothes in the basket, helping set the table, feeding the dog, picking up toys. Freda the Freeloader is becoming Hannah the Helper. As she discovers that she can do things for herself she learns that she can play alone, too.

Mom may have to be creative here. Like putting her in her room, telling her that Mama has some work to do, and that she can come out of her room when the timer rings (in 20 minutes at first but working up to an hour). She'll likely want to come out early, so just take it in stride and start over. Miss Tag-along should not share the family bed. The goal here is for her to discover that she is a Me, that she can exist and be happy even when she's not center stage. Snuggle and read to her at night - or have her "read." But at 5 she needs to discover that mom and dad are no longer her resident valets. It will mean changing some habits for both of you, but be strong.

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

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Extension Tips
 by
Robert Brewer



New food plate replaces food pyramid
 What's on your dinner plate?
 To get Americans to eat healthier, the U.S. Department of Agriculture wants them to think about their dinner plates - literally.

The department recently unveiled its MyPlate campaign, which uses a plate instead of the old pyramid to illustrate a balanced meal. The plate is divided with labeled sections to show proper portions for fruit, vegetables, grains and meat on the plate, and includes a small blue circle to its side to show dairy as the drink.

This new symbol is the beginning of the conversation. It is the image that gets people talking about what they eat and shows the variety of foods people should be consuming and the proper proportions that should be consumed from each food group. People don't eat on a pyramid, they eat on a plate. This presentation is easier for people to understand.

For example, the plate's vegetable section is larger than its fruit section, which shows that a person needs to eat more vegetables than fruits each day.

The guideline focuses on balancing calories with physical activity and encourage Americans to eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains and low-fat dairy products and less sodium, saturated fats, trans fats, added sugar and refined grain.

The guidelines' core messages are to:

- Enjoy food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.
- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Drink fat-free or

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.

low-fat milk.

- Compare sodium levels in food and choose food with lower sodium.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

The fresher the foods the better, or the least processed the better.

Buy frozen fruits and vegetables instead of canned. But even frozen entrees labeled as "healthy" are still high in sodium and often have "a long list of mystery ingredients."

While some frozen meals are good for portion control, adding a fresh fruit or one vegetable and a glass of milk will balance out the meal.

Many children consume most of their daily calories from sugar or fat. They are eating a very energy-dense diet that is low in nutrients like vitamins and minerals.

New school regulations will limit sugary drinks and trans fat in schools. It is much easier to train a kid to choose more nutritional foods than to change an adult later. If the whole family adopts healthy eating habits, they will all benefit.


The USDA recommends children and adolescents have at least one hour of physical activity daily. However, less than half of children and only 8 percent of adolescents get this much exercise. Adults should be active at least 150 minutes a week to prevent and control disease, but only five percent actually are.

It is important to encourage young people and adults to participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age, that are enjoyable and that offer variety.

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



If tomorrow never comes
 From Raymond Bigelow, Milwaukee:

"If I knew it would be the last time I'd see you fall asleep, I would tuck you in more tightly and pray the Lord, your soul to keep. If I knew it would be the last time that I'd see you walk out the door, I would give you a hug and a kiss and call you back for one more. If I knew it would be the last time I'd hear your voice lifted in praise, I would video tape each action and each word, so I could play them back day after day. If I knew it would be the last time, I could spare an extra minute or two, to stop and say "I love you", instead of assuming you would know I do. If I knew it would be the last time I would be there to share your day, well I'm sure you'll have so many more, so I can let this one slip away. For surely there's always tomorrow to make up for an oversight, and we always get a second chance to make everything right. There will always be another day to say our "I love you's", and certainly there's another chance to say our "anything I can do's?" But just in case I might be wrong and today is all I get, I'd like to say how much I love you, and I hope we never forget, tomorrow is not promised to anyone, young or old alike, and today may be the last chance you get to hold your loved one tight. So if you are waiting for tomorrow, why not do it today? For if tomorrow never comes, you'll surely regret the day that you didn't take that extra time for a smile, a hug, or a kiss and you were too busy to grant someone, what turned out to be their one last wish. So hold your loved ones close today, whisper in their ear, tell them how much you love them and that you'll always hold them dear. Take time to say

"I'm sorry," "please forgive me," "thank you," you'll have no regrets about today."

One of my favorite authors has been Erma Bombeck. Her observations about life were simple yet profound. She was spunky and didn't beat around the bush about what she wanted to say. Just before her death she was reflecting on her life and pondered the question who she would change if she had her life to live over. She listed the following:

"I would have talked less and listened more."

"I would have invited friends over to dinner even if the carpet was stained and the sofa faded."

"I would have taken time to listen to my grandfather ramble about his youth."

"I would have burned a pink candle sculptured like a rose before it melted in storage."

"I would have sat on the lawn with my children and not worried about grass stains."

"I would have cried and laughed less while watching television and more while watching life."


"I would have shared more of the responsibility carried by my husband."

"I would have gone to bed when I was sick instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren't there for a day."

"Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment and realized that the wonder growing inside of me was my only chance in life to assist God in a miracle."

"There would have been more 'I love you's,' more 'I'm sorry's,' but mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute - look at it and really see it, live it, and never give it back."

If you knew that you had only a short time to live, what would be the very next thing you would do? Right now, when you finish reading this article, why don't you make a list of the things that you would change in your life.



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 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 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 #414F & 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 Players 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, mtnregarts-craftsguild.org. mtnregarts-craftsguild@hotmail.com.
VFW 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/blueridge-mountains.
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.
Chattage 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.
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.
GMREC Native Plant Garden Tours: Mondays 9 AM-1 PM. May-Sept. (except holidays). 706-745-2655.