

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

### Letter to the Editor

Unicoi Detachment, Marine Corps League has been associated with Toys For Tots for 14 years. The Toys For Tots Local Coordinator, who is not a member of the Marine Corps League, wanted us to collect money to be sent to the Toys For Tots Foundation. We have not actively sought money in our toy drives because we felt any money collected should be used to help children, families, individuals and charities located in our area. For this reason, Unicoi Detachment has severed its ties to Toys For Tots.

We will still have a toy drive, but it will be called Unicoi Detachment, MCL Toy Drive. Unicoi has members in Fannin, Lumpkin, Towns, Union and White Counties. Any toys Unicoi collects in a county will be distributed to children in that county. If we are lucky enough to have a surplus in a county, then, and only then, will the surplus be distributed to a county that needs more toys.

We thank the people and businesses for their past support in our goal to help the people and charities of our area. We look forward to your continued support to aid those who need our help.

*Semper Fidelis (Always Faithful)*  
Wayne Roshaven, Commandant  
Unicoi Detachment, Marine Corps League

### Letter to the Editor:

The following query is directed to the Towns County Water and Sewer Authority (the Authority): Have you lost your mind? October 1st you are planning to raise the water rates when this country is on the verge of a double-dip recession? Have you read the last few pages of the Towns County Herald lately? There is at the very least two pages of foreclosures on property in Towns County.

For those residents who are outraged, the following information was supplied by the office of the Authority: The Authority is not a government entity, so it does not answer to anyone. The board has the power to raise rates without the approval of commissioners or residents.

If you are upset by the current rate hike, here's the math: If you use 4,000 gallons a month, here is the math utilizing the current rates. \$18 for the first 1,500 gallons with an additional \$4 for each additional thousand gallons, so your current bill would be \$28. With the new rates that go into effect October 1, your bill will be \$34. If the math is correct, that is over a 21% increase. When was the last time your pay check or social security check was raised 21%?

In conclusion, for those that are interested, the Authority meets the third Monday of the month at 7 PM, 1224 Jack Dayton Circle (the road beside the Fieldstone Theater). The next scheduled meeting is September 19. If you would like to speak at the meeting to voice your opposition to this rate increase, you may call the office the business day before the meeting and ask to be placed on the agenda.

*Sincerely yours,*  
Sonia Sanchez



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

Have you seen the new TV program, "Toddlers and Tiaras"? Don't bother. It's disgusting. A couple of columns back I took the fashion industry to task for offering inappropriately-adult clothing styles for toddlers. Tiny little girls, actually.

But that was before I saw "Toddlers and Tiaras." I've come to the conclusion that we've got some sick moms on our hands here. A recent "fashion show" on the program for instance has a 4-year old dressed up like the prostitute played by Julia Roberts in "Pretty Woman."

I mean black vinyl knee-high boots, a spandex mini-skirt and a sultry blonde wig. When that little gal is fourteen she's going to come home some Saturday night and tell her mom she's pregnant and her mother will scratch her head as though trying to figure out how such a thing could happen.

I don't know who the sponsors are for the program (which appears on the channel formerly entitled The Learning Channel), and I am not inclined to call for boycotts anyway, but I have to admit that I find this situation tempting.

Fortunately the Par-

ent Television Council has weighed in on this fiasco being piped weekly into America's homes. Said a PTC spokesperson, "We have a serious problem when a network... features a toddler who probably hasn't learned to read, dressed as a prostitute showing off her sexy strut... There's no question, TV executives are complicit in robbing these small kids of their childhood... children today are being sexualized at younger and younger ages. All available data suggests they will suffer for it later on."

I talk about this kind of stuff from time to time for a couple of reasons. First, it's sometimes easy to feel that if enough people are doing it, it must be OK. In this case, it's not OK. This is child abuse; there is no other appropriate term.

Second, it helps us be on our guard as leadership parents when we become aware of this kind of travesty going on around us because it helps alert us to the direction our culture is moving. Then we can be more intentional about managing its influence in our own families.

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@rarekids.net. (NSep14,M1)SH

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Over the last weekend we paused, as did much of the nation, to reflect on the decade since September 11, 2001. There were many heroes on that day. There have been many since - and many sacrifices.

In the flood of opinions that flowed through our information portals during the commemorative events of the weekend, we noticed one opinion in particular. The commentator compared the events of 2001 to the beginning days of World War I, when the peoples of the western world lost their innocence.

We agree in principle, but only as far as our younger generation can now question whether they will be better off than their parents. There is indeed a loss of innocence in realizing that the affluence which Americans have enjoyed for two generations is now in jeopardy, but there is still a great deal of innocence to be found, and its first cousin, ignorance, is thriving. This is a danger inherent in a decade of war, when a generation comes of age during a time when conflict is the norm and enemies are lurking at the edges of every event, at every airport, in every bus terminal, train and subway station.

At the Flight 93 Memorial, former president George W. Bush said, "One of the lessons of 9-11 is that evil is real and so is courage." It was a fine speech, one of his best. But the invocation of evil speaks to the limited understanding of world events which governments ask their peoples to accept at face value. It is the kind of limited understanding necessary to perpetuate a conflict that has cost at least \$1.3 trillion and over six thousand American lives, not to mention the lives of over one hundred thousand civilians. One wonders how much evil was eliminated through the deaths of all those men, women and children.

We all understand the heroism and the sacrifice that grows out of the finest qualities of our people and our way of life. Our faith, our democratic principles, the stability of our republic, our free market economy and the freedoms which we enjoy are all worth defending. We understand that we have enemies bent on our destruction and willing to die in any effort to harm us. We need to understand how those enemies were created. If we do not gain this understanding, then the sacrifices we have made of democracy and our republic to the ever growing executive branch, the sacrifices we have made of the free market to an increasingly intrusive government and the sacrifices we have made of personal freedoms to the security state - will continue until there is nothing left that can be sacrificed.

We can begin to expand our understanding of the current predicament with the knowledge that the United States maintains

### 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.

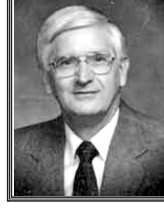
Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication. \*Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

hundreds of military bases around the world. The DOD 2010 Base Structure Report lists 662 foreign sites in 38 countries. The reasons for these bases are varied and the history is detailed, but there are common themes. Maintaining national security is, in large part, an effort to maintain supply lines of natural resources and to safeguard economic zones, and this is where our personal ownership of the problem comes into play. The unfortunate fact is that our current energy affluence - our way of life centered on the automobile and marked by waste - is dependent on extracting oil from parts of the world where religion and social structure generate volatility.

If there was no oil in the Middle East it is highly unlikely that our presence there would be so immense. Some strategic thinkers have recognized this and the awareness of our need to end our dependence on foreign energy has even appeared from time to time on the political stage. A Middle East without an imperial American presence would bring a peace dividend that would go a long way towards solving our financial problems. It would reduce the number of our enemies which exist solely because foreign troops are stationed on their soil.

Do we have an option to abandon oil from the Middle East? Not really. Not yet. As a people, we have been very reluctant to conserve, to save and to consider a lifestyle that does not include the frigid in the summer, balmy in the winter, maximum horsepower full-speed-ahead way of life of previous generations. As a government we have stifled innovation with intrusiveness and interference in the free market and we have strangled the economy with a ridiculous tax code and an insane monetary policy which will grow nothing but debt and the size of government.

Have we made progress in the last decade? Some. Alternative energy sources are beginning to take a bite out of our dependence on fossil fuels. Energy from domestic sources has steadily increased. Have we learned to conserve? Not really. In fact, any savings that we have gained is due more to our economic slowdown than to any voluntary efforts. We are approaching a nexus. Before this point, we can proactively take steps to become leaner, more efficient, more localized. Past this point and we will react to each new crisis as best we can.



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

### How old are you?

Scientists say each of us is actually three ages in one: chronological age, marked by the calendar; biological age, marked by the condition of our bodies; psychological or spiritual age, determined by how old we act and feel. How old are you in age? How many years have you lived since the womb? Reckon how many remaining years you have before the tomb? It is said that Diogenes was told that he should take a rest, since he was an old man. He replied, "If I were running in the stadium, ought I to slacken my pace when approaching the goal? Ought I not rather put on speed?" Actually the duration of life in years is not a true measurement for the success or failure in life. Life is best measured, not by the calendar, but by the contribution one has made with his life. Contrast the long life of purity and devotion to Christ by Sir Walter Scott and the short, empty life of Lord Byron. When Sir Walter Scott lay dying, he said to his friend, Lockhart, "I have been perhaps the most voluminous author of my day, and it is a comfort for me to think that I have tried to unsettle no man's faith, to corrupt no man's principles, and that I have written nothing which on my death bed I should wish blotted out." Lord Byron, on the other hand, lived a life given over to indulgences penned these sad words when he was only 36 years of age: "My days are in the yellow leaf. The flowers and fruits of love are gone. The worm,

the canker and the grief are mine alone." Some people are old at a young age and some people are still young at an old age. How old are you in ambitions? There are multitudes whose soul ambition is to fulfill the desires of their bodies. They overeat, over drink, neglect rest, indulge in sexual misbehavior and in general abuse and wear out their bodies at an early age. Others see their bodies as a sacred temple where God is to reside as master of their lives. They treat the body with reverence and respect, knowing that it is the only house God has given here on earth. They use their talents and abilities God has given to them to make this world a better place. They have ambitions that are selfless and not selfish. There is more to life than living to gratify the animal instincts of one's body. How old are you in aspirations? No matter one's chronological age we should always be young in our aspirations. We should never cease striving for the highest. At a certain place in the Alps there is a monument erected to mark the tomb of a guide who died in an attempt to scale the Alps. Three descriptive words are written in that lively granite stone: "He died climbing." No matter your calendar age, keep on climbing. It is better to die climbing than to die cranky, complaining, criticizing, cantankerous and confined to a rocking chair. Paul said, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).



## Community Calendar

**Towns County Water Board Meeting** 3rd Monday of each month at 7 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 at 6:30 PM the 2nd Thursday of each month at Daniels Steak House. For more info call 706-379-1371.

**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 Unicoi 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 Players** intermediate level meets at 12:45 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Recreational Dept.

**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, mtregartsandcraftsguild.org, mtregartsandcraftsguild@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.

**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.

**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.

**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. Caregivers or family members of those with dementia are encouraged to attend. For further information, 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.

## Towns County Herald

Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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