

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

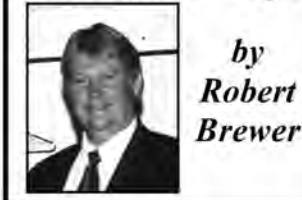
Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

It still seems like yesterday that Wallace "Banjo" Anderson, a cold-blooded killer, chose to kill my brother, Roger Shook. Anderson is coming up for parole again. Please help keep this killer where he belongs - and out of our community - by making a call (you may remain anonymous) to the Georgia State Pardon & Parole Board now! The phone number is 404-656-5651 or you may email them at victimservices@pap.state.ga.us. Thank you for your support.

Ken Shook

Extension Tips



by Robert Brewer

Ban winter rodents from your home

Get rid of any places where mice and rats can hide.

Fall is near. Leaves are turning colors. Squirrels are storing nuts, and mice and rats are looking for the best way to get into your home for winter. Your home doesn't have to become a rodent resort.

Mice and rats can enter your house through openings as small as a dime. Closing their entry holes is one of the most effective ways to prevent mice and rats from becoming a pest in your home.

Most important, get rid of any places where mice and rats can hide and reproduce. Remove trash, old boards, weeds, brush piles, rock piles, firewood and other junk from your home, garage and property.

Keep garbage in tightly covered cans. Feed dogs and cats from dishes, and take up uneaten food. Use squirrel guards to deter rats and mice from feeding from bird feeders. Don't pile wood against the house, and store firewood at least a foot off the ground.

Make sure patio and garage doors stay closed, seal openings under doors, and cover windows with one-quarter-inch mesh wire screen.

Cement or caulk around pipes (gas, water, hose or air conditioning drains) and wires (phone, cable and TV). Cover clothes dryer vents, but allow for adequate airflow. Clean

them regularly to remove lint that could be a fire hazard.

Seal small holes and cracks by stuffing them with steel wool and caulking over them.

Why is it so important to keep rodents at bay? Rats and mice can carry fleas and ticks and transmit bacteria and diseases. They can spoil food, too, and eat crops, stored grains, birdseed and pet food.

Rats and mice have poor eyesight but excellent senses of smell, taste and touch. They usually hide during the day and come out at night. If you see one, you can be sure there are many more you haven't seen.

Three species like to live indoors, and all three can be found in Georgia. They are the house mouse, the Norway rat and the roof rat.

House mice are three inches long, not including the tail, which doesn't have fur.

Rats are much larger and can be up to a foot long, not including the tail.

Norway rats are also called brown rats, house rats, barn rats, sewer rats, gray rats or wharf rats. They are heavily bodied and weigh more than a pound. Their ears do not reach past their eyes. Their fur is usually brown or reddish gray, and they are not good climbers.

Roof rats, also known as black or ship rats, are sleek with ears that extend past their eyes. They weigh between 5 ounces and 10 ounces. Their fur can be brown or black. They are good climbers.

For more information on rats and mice, visit the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' publication, "Rats and Mice: Get Them Out of Your House and Yard," at pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/pubcd/C970/C970.html.

From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

This week I would like to talk about safe driving. It has been my experience in law enforcement that there are two contributing factors that are the most common causes of traffic accidents: failure to maintain lane and failure to yield. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, over 40% of car crashes were due to driver errors caused by inattention or distractions (Farago, R. 2008). Many are concerned about speed and they should be. While speed is less often the cause of the collision, speed is likely the primary factor in determining how serious the accident is in terms of injury.

As we come into the fall season we have many things to distract us. School is back in session and with it comes morning traffic, as well as increased activities, such as sports and after school programs. We also have many tourists who will soon be arriving to the area seeking to enjoy the sights of the changing leaves.

With all these extra activities on our minds it is easy to become distracted while driving. We are thinking about the things we have going on in other areas of our lives, rather than thinking about what we are doing at the time. It is easy to forget that driving a motor vehicle is an inherently dangerous undertaking. We get so used to driving that we forget that we are traveling at a high rate of speed in a 2,000+ pound vehicle. Fifty-five miles per hour, or even 35 miles per hour is a high rate of speed and creates a lot of energy. In a collision, speed will determine the amount of energy exchanged; the greater the energy the more likely that serious injury or death will result.

Another serious factor is driving under the influence. Towns County Sheriff's Office will continue to aggressively enforce DUI laws in an effort to keep our citizens safe. Alcohol related crashes occur only when someone chooses to drive while impaired. Thus, they are 100% avoidable. This is a choice

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.

that will likely result in going to jail. If you choose to drink, please do not drive. If you need assistance, the Sheriff's Office will help you get a ride home. If a person chooses to drink and drive, they will be arrested if caught.

According to the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, Towns County had 24 fatal car accidents between 1999-2008 (Dallas, B. 2010). Last year we had two fatal collisions. While Towns County has shown improvement and we are certainly in the lower percentages of fatal crashes in the state, I believe that even one fatal accident is one too many.

As you travel the roadways please remember that an accident can happen in a fraction of a second. Please stay safe by being alert to possible dangers. Always look ahead and be prepared to avoid a possible collision. Always wear a seatbelt, and never drink and drive. Your friends and family are counting on you to make it to your destination safely.

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

Pull the Trigger

Have you known or perhaps you now know individuals who have problems pulling the trigger on life? In fact, as you read this you may say, "That's my problem." Over the years I have known folks who made every provision and preparation for decisions in life, but who could never pull the trigger. They were always saying, "ready-aim-aim-aim-aim." They could never say, "ready-aim-fire." Growing up my dad, brothers and I enjoyed target shooting with pistols and rifles. We had an ideal red clay bank where we placed the targets. Life is all about the target. I read this week of a young man who lightly kissed his fiancée on the cheek. Pointing politely to her lips, she said, "Aim higher, please." If you don't have a worthy target to shoot at it won't matter where you hit. But if you are serious about life and living you will have a vision and a worthy target. Some of the things my dad taught us boys were the respect and proper care of guns. The target was situated at the proper distance. You used the best ammunition available and measured the distance from the target. You carefully sighted and focused upon the center (bulls-eye) of the target. You never just carelessly pointed and shot. However, you never focused, gripped and calculated so long that you became tense and nervous. It was ready-aim-fire. You must pull

the trigger if you have the thrill of hitting the target. Paul refers to those who are always studying, ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of truth (II Tim. 3:17). While attending college and seminary I met some classmates who were professional students. They were always learning and preparing but never quite ready to pull the trigger. They were not ready to get a job and start serving God and His people. They seemed to fear missing the target, not being successful or afraid of criticism if they failed. School and learning offered a safe haven for them. In serving churches I have also met these same people. They are always preparing, aiming, "when I get ready" or "when I get around to it" I plan to do great things. Having the proper target, utilizing the best ammunition, taking careful aim, all of that is important, but you must pull that trigger if the target is penetrated. Some of you who are reading this column have been "aiming to make improvements in your personal life, your family life, your educational life, financial life or spiritual life. You have been "aiming" so long that you have grown tense and nervous. You have had your finger on the trigger, but you haven't experienced the thrill and exhilaration of actually pulling the trigger.

For many, life is ready-aim-aim-aim-aim - I aim to break that habit, I aim to make that will, I aim to do better, I aim to trust Christ as my savior, I aim to be baptized, I aim to join the church. I aim to change. Go ahead! Pull the trigger and enjoy life, not only aiming at the target, but actually firing away!



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 2nd Thursday of every month. Please call Kim Bailey at 706-994-2727 or 706-896-6747 for details.

Towns County Republican Party meets the 4th Tuesday 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 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 #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 Health 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.

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.

Old Fashioned Square Dance Lessons each Mon. in Hiawassee, GA, 6 p.m. at the Senior Center (2 blocks south of the town square, beside the Courthouse) Hiawassee, GA 706-896-1060

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.

Mended Hearts Support Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month at Chatuge Regional Hospital Cafeteria from 5:30-7 PM. For information contact 706-994-6988.

We do Family Oral History of all of our residents. If you have not had your family history recorded ad 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.

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Q: When I was growing up it seems like my parents were really strict with me. Now the emphasis seems to be more laid back and easy-going. Do you think that's healthy for our kids?

A: Interesting question. I don't know what your age is, but for generations American families raised their kids to obey. Mine sure did. But in the mid-1960's the pendulum began to swing. Parenting "experts" began to teach that the family should be democratic. Books like "Parenting Effectiveness Training" began to strip away the authority that parents had. Mom and Dad began to give up their right to be leaders in their own homes.

The results were huge. Instead of kids looking to their parents with respect and obedience, parents began to look to their kids with fear. If Johnny disobeys, mom's first question might be, "Oh, my, what have I done wrong to cause him to act like that?" If Sally calls her mother names, mom asks, "I

wonder what I've done to make her so angry with me." So the little villain is seen as the victim, and the care-giver begins to see herself as a failure.

Not only has it created a generation of ill-behaved kids, but it has been traumatic to the stress level of many of America's moms. I have a friend who says, "Being a mother today is dangerous to the mental health of women."

So now what? Two key terms are essential as guidelines for today's parents: Love and Leadership. Especially in that ten-year spread between the ages of three and the teens. That is the time when kids learn respect, obedience, responsibility, and family loyalty. Leaders have a vision for the future that the led do not have. Therefore to produce healthy and productive children, mom and dad must bring a leadership role to the family. More on this topic in the next few columns.

You are invited to submit your parenting questions to: DrDon@rarekids.net.

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