

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor

Callie Armstrong recently held a Bake Sale and donated the proceeds to the Towns County Food Pantry. Because of Callie's hard work and all those that donated, she raised enough money to purchase almost 300 pounds of food for those in need. We sincerely appreciate everyone that made this possible.

If you are interested in donating make checks payable to Towns County Food Pantry. Mail to P.O. Box 42, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

*We appreciate your help.
Towns County Food Pantry*

Extension Tips



by
**Robert
Brewer**

Hunters, don't forget about food safety!

To many people, fall means hunting - the time to gather nature's bounty and put food on their family's table. Making sure that food is safe is an important part of a hunter's skill.

It is easy for wild game to become contaminated with fecal matter and thus any bacteria that might be present. E. coli O157:H7 and Salmonella are just two of several disease-causing microorganisms that may be present. This is where the skill of the hunter can make a big difference. If the animal is wounded in such a way that the contents of its gut come in contact with the meat or the hunter's hands while dressing the meat, fecal bacteria can contaminate the meat.

Here are some tips that can help you improve the safety of the wild game you serve you family:

1) Avoid using meat from gut-shot animals to make products such as jerky. Instead, use this meat only for dishes that will be thoroughly cooked.

2) Bacteria can multiply quickly in warm temperatures. Keep the carcass out of sunlight. Take along coolers of ice. For a safer product, chill the meat quickly. Carcasses need to be cooled rapidly to

40 degrees F or below.

3) Sanitation in the field is important. Take along soap and clean water or wet wipes and hand sanitizer for cleaning hands in the field before and after handling the meat. Wear disposable gloves while handling the meat. Use clean water, wet wipes or alcohol swabs to clean the knives frequently or between cuts to help prevent the spread of bacteria.

4) When aging venison or game birds, temperatures should be held at 40 degrees F or below. Only animals that are handled properly, are clean and are not gut shot should be aged.

5) If you take the animal to a processor, use only a licensed, reputable processor with refrigeration capabilities.

6) Freeze any meat that will not be used within 2 to 3 days.

7) When preparing the meat for cooking, wash hands with warm, running water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat. Use clean utensils and work areas.

8) Thaw meat completely in the refrigerator or in the microwave followed by immediate cooking.

9) Marinate meat in the refrigerator.

10) Use a calibrated meat or food thermometer to make sure any wild game is cooked to at least 160 degrees F to be safely cooked. If game birds are stuffed, the temperature of the stuffing must reach 165 degrees F and the bird should reach 180 degrees F. It is safest to cook stuffing outside the bird.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The wisdom is as old as history. It survives in homilies and platitudes repeated so often as to go unnoticed by many, but it is intuited if not understood by a variety of people: a student working to gain an education, an athlete training to excel, a child saving to buy a bicycle (or an iPod) or a parent saving to send that child to college. The wisdom is this; that great things are accomplished by sacrificing a measure of immediate gratification to make small, incremental changes oriented towards a future goal.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. "Slow and steady wins the race," said the tortoise to the hare. Our parents' generation understood this. They opened savings accounts when they were young. They bought bonds and annuities. If they invested in the stock market they chose companies with solid fundamentals which paid dividends. Back in the "old days" nation building was funded by a country's savings. The WWII Generation used their savings to build the strongest nation in the world with the best schools, the best infrastructure, the best science and the most innovative businesses.

If civilization survives us, historians may argue indefinitely about where we lost our way. If you compare today's economy, infrastructure and educational system with those of the previous generation, we begin to look like one of those before and after posters of a meth addict. Our drug, it seems, was gratification. Born into the affluence created by the previous generation, we lost the will to sacrifice anything for our own future. Some say that we allowed the moral fiber of the nation to weaken, but we might also understand it this way: Our dissipation weakened our immune system and made us vulnerable to an array of predators and parasites.

Parasites and predators have been with us since we lived in caves, but today we exist in a tapeworm economy while the vultures circle overhead. If we are lucky enough to have a dollar, an incredible array of devices exist to entice or to extort it from us. All forms of communication and commercial media are infested with tapeworms. The Internet is becoming one endless marketing campaign. Radio and television attempt to shout us into submission. Even the old fashioned telephone is not safe from the computer generated sales pitch.

Our largest and most venerable institutions have also turned parasitic. If we want to save for the future, our bank

pays us almost nothing for the use of our money - but if we want to use it, transfer it or, so it seems, even look at it - they charge us a fee. We can't drive an automobile without paying an insurance company - and who can afford to have a tooth filled or visit a doctor without insurance? But of all the institutions great and small, the hungriest, the greediest, the most parasitic is none other than our own government.

In such an environment sacrificing and saving for the future becomes difficult when our best efforts are barely sufficient to keep up with our obligations. We are living with the consequences of our choices and unfortunately we are only in the beginning stages of what some have called the Great Recession or, as Bill Bonner coined, "The Great Correction." Like a drug addict beginning to detox, our society is in for some unpredictable behavior as we experience withdrawal symptoms from being denied the instant gratifications we can no longer afford. Working Americans are becoming savvy to this situation. Our savings rate has grown rapidly as we learn to spend less and save more. But in the process we are starving many of the parasites which have thrived for so long on our indiscretions.

Think of it this way - our economy is being "wormed," and like the dog or cat unfortunate enough to have experienced this process, we will feel a little sick for a while as the parasites struggle to stay alive. Our biggest challenge will be "worming" the government, which has bored very deeply into us, feeding heavily on our vital processes.

In our growing frustration it may make us feel better for a moment to consider the similarity between government institutions and tapeworms. In the final analysis, however, we are dealing exclusively with human beings; human beings who share many of the same addictions that have plagued the general population. The difference is that the people in government are in a position to leverage their addictions. We feel the momentary rush of power when we are able to satisfy our desire for instant gratification. In government the rush of power is more long lasting. It is, perhaps, a more serious addiction. Wrestling power from such an addict will not be any easier than taking the car keys from an alcoholic, but it must be done. We have allowed Washington to drive drunk for too long.



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

Change brings more change

The Bible says that God never changes (Hebrews 13:8). Why do you suppose that God never changes? I believe that it has to do with something called perfection. God is perfect; therefore, there could never be a need for God to change. Although, God never changes He is always in the process of changing His fallen creation. Since we are not perfect, God is always working in our lives to conform us into the image of His Son. I must admit that I have seen one or two people who thought they were perfect. One gentleman said the only person he knew who was perfect was his wife's first husband! Well, I don't want to pursue perfection in this column but I do want to look at change. As I write this article it is only a few hours until we change from the summer season to the fall season. The temperature says it's still summer but the calendar says it is the beginning of fall. The leaves in my yard tell me the calendar is right on target. The seasons are just like we are; they want to keep holding on. Summer is going to keep putting on the heat as long as it can. I have retired two or three times but I never stopped preaching. I still feel young at heart, but slightly older in other places. As someone has said, "Age stiffens the joints but softens the heart." One old codger said he would go fishing seven days a week but he found himself washing dishes three times a day. Fall ushers in different weather patterns: it shortens the days, lengthens the nights and transforms almost all plant life. The beginning of fall means in just a few days we must change the time. That's the way change is, when one thing changes it sets in motion a whole series of things that change. The other day I made an innocent statement about moving one piece of furniture out of my study. Every twenty or thirty years I get bored with the sameness of a room. It was fairly early in the day, and I can't imagine what caused me to make such a statement to my wife. From there it all began. Just moving one piece of furniture resulted in a complete make over of my study, the den and part of a bedroom not to mention the disorganization of my shop. I pushed, pulled, shoved, heaved and strained everything from my toenails to the hairs on my head. We moved furniture from one side of the room to the other and from one room to another. That meant we had to remove all pictures from the walls and re-arrange them which necessitates stopping up some holes and making new ones which in turn means doing some touch-up painting. Finally, at 1:15 a.m., I got into the shower but I still had to spend the entire next day completing our work. I can't believe how complicated changing one piece of furniture became. I have changed my tune about change. It will not kill you but it may cause a lot of pain. When God works to change us sometimes it hurts, but the end result will be well worth the pain.

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

When Alvin was eleven he was a bit overweight...no, he was fat. Not huge fat you understand, just fat. Whenever his mom bought clothes for him she always bought him tee shirts. And they were always tight.

Now, tight tee shirts were not flattering to Alvin. Not only did they show every roll, they emphasized places where no boy likes to have places. His buddies made fun; the girls snickered.

Alvin began compensating by wearing a coat even when it was warm; even when it was hot. True, it looked strange, but it was better than the embarrassment of revealing contours he desperately wished he didn't have.

More than once Alvin started to talk about the tee shirt thing with his folks. But they were not willing to be part of the conversation. Something about, "You unappreciative brat, you ought to be thankful we buy you new clothes at all." True story.

We've been talking about respect; let me define it: Respect: The act of treating another person with dignity and fairness.

Granted, that's my definition, but it's a good one.

Sean knows mom and dad are not going to be pleased when they learn that he stole a calculator from a classmate's backpack. But he knows he will not be berated or trounced. Rather he knows that restitution, apology, and the proper discipline will be discussed and that when the incident is over, he and his parents will still be friends. And Sean will have learned some big lessons.

When we learn to watch for them, teachable moments are everywhere. They don't require a lecture, a scolding, a shouting match, a threat, or an argument. Just a Rare Kids; Well Done attitude and a wise parent or two. Try it.

Submit your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.com.

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.

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"It's amazing how the candidates expect us to forget all their faults and still remember their names on election day."

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Sen. Johnny Isakson, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-3643
Sen. Saxby Chambliss, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-3521
U.S. Congressman Paul Broun, 10th District, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-4101
Rep. Stephen Allison, Georgia House of Representatives, 404-656-0177 or 0185
Sen. Jim Butterworth, Georgia State Senate, 404-463-1367
Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall, 706-896-2276
Clerk of Superior Court Cecil Dye, 706-896-2130
Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers, 706-896-2267
Magistrate/Probate Judge David Rogers, 706-896-3467
Sheriff Chris Clinton, 706-896-4444
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