

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

"Forget gold! I'm investing in peanut butter!"



The Middle Path

by Don Perry

"Almost everything—all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure—these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart." -Steve Jobs

Perhaps all of us who live in an area blessed by seasons experience a heightened awareness in the month when the last vestiges of summer green transform into a panoply of fall color. The mists of spring and the haze of summer are long gone and the crystalline quality of the air invites us to look, to notice, to see farther. October brings the first hints of winter, and Nature, acutely aware of the inevitable, busies herself in preparation. Bees work harder to bring in the last vestiges of sustenance to see them through the gray months. Birds, squirrels and chipmunks gather with intensity and purpose. Snakes are on the move; sluggish on cooler days, cranky and dangerous in the heat, they seek that buried place that will shelter them from the winter chill.

It may be that the approach of Halloween and All Saint's Day inspires during this month an enhanced appreciation for the past, for the departed, for that which is mysterious and ghostly and unknowable. The changing seasons are a powerful metaphor for the passage of time in our own lives, and the awareness of our own passing will influence us whether we are conscious of it or not. The ant in us will

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.



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

Watch those onion skins Well, we have had our first cold snap and the prognosticators are predicting what kind of winter we can expect. Some self-proclaimed weather experts watch worms to see how much fuzz they have on their bodies. The thicker the fuzz the colder the winter. Other weather watchers examine ears of corn to determine the thickness of the shucks. Again, the thicker the shuck the colder the winter. Still other weather researchers watch the squirrels to see how many nuts they store away. Then we have the scientifically trained meteorologists who study weather patterns leading up to winter plus past weather conditions. Their predictions are based on objective data not on worms, plants or animals. They claim their predictions are more accurate. However, I have heard that there have been weather persons who have had to leave town because the weather didn't agree with them. Some of our ancestor farmers thought they had it figured out. They calculated thus: "Onion skins very thin, mild winter coming in; onion skins thick and tough, coming winter cold and rough!" I heard about the Indians on a remote reservation who approached their new chief to find out whether the coming winter was going to be mild or cold.

Being a new chief in a modern society he did not know the old secrets. When he looked at the sky he had no idea what the weather would be. He had to give an answer so he told his tribe that it was going to be a very cold winter and everyone should start collecting wood. But being the wise chief he was he located a phone booth and called the National Weather Service. He inquired whether the winter was going to be cold and sure enough the Weather Service said, "It is going to be cold indeed." The chief went back and told his tribe to gather more wood because the winter is going to be severe. About a week later he made another call to the Weather Service to see if it was going to be really cold. Sure enough the Weather Service told him it was going to be very cold. He hurried back to his people and urged them to gather every scrap of wood they could find. Two weeks later he called the Weather Service again and they told him that the coming winter was going to be the coldest ever. He asked the man, "How can you be so sure?" The weather man said, "The Indians are collecting wood like crazy." I agree with Mark Twain who said, "Weather is a literary specialty, and no untrained hand can turn out a good article on it." Aren't you glad that God is in control of nature's seasons? How beautiful is His creation. Thank Him, won't you? John Ruskin said it best, "Freshing is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces up, snow is exhilarating; there is no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of weather."

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor

Holidays are just around the corner so it is turkey and ham ordering time.

As you all know the Towns County Food Pantry has been distributing turkeys and hams to our clients for the past three years. Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here before we know it. It is time to order our meats! Last year we provided 588 turkeys for Thanksgiving and 595 hams for Christmas to our much needed families.

The unfortunate news arrived from the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia the end of last week. Unlike last year when we were able to order up to 800 turkeys and hams, this year we are only able to order 300 of each. Obviously this shortage is going to be a big problem for our community. We have so many more families in need. Economic times are very hard now and will especially be during the holidays.

As you know the Towns County Food Pantry is funded strictly by donations from our community. In order to be able to provide turkeys and hams to our families, we will again be relying on the generosity of the community.

Perhaps a turkey and ham food drive can supplement the much needed demand. We are also going to talk to our local vendors (Ingles, Dills, etc.) to see if they can work with us for help find another avenue to pursue.

We have the freezer space at the pantry to keep MANY turkeys and hams for our clients. With the support of our community we are hoping to be able to serve turkeys and hams to as many in need families as possible.

If you feel your organization and its members would like to take part in our "meat drive" that would be wonderful. Donations in any form - turkeys, hams, monetary, etc. can go a long way!

We expect our need to be higher than in the past so anyway we can help our clients will be great for all involved!

Any help will be so appreciated. If you would like to discuss any of the above, please feel free to contact Richard or Tracy at the Food Pantry (706) 896-4783.

Towns County Food Pantry

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE By Don Jacobsen

When I was in grade school in the northwest I walked to school and back every day. About a mile and a half each way. When it was sunny I walked. When it was raining I walked. When it was cold I walked faster. So did my buddies. When we could afford it I got a very used bike and rode it to school. Now of course the kids who live where I lived are met each morning by a heated and air conditioned school bus. Nice, huh? Progress.

But I'm wondering if I wasn't the fortunate one. There are three times more obese (politically correct synonym for fat) kids in our nation than there were just thirty years ago. That is a very frightening trend. We are facing an epidemic of diabetes among this generation of kids, which is destined to be devastating not only to their health, but also to the health of the system that will be asked to provide care for them.

But here's the good news: Those who track these things tell us that kids who are active have a "substantially lower" risk of obesity,

diabetes, cancer, heart disease, stroke, and osteoporosis. By the way, the same is true of mom and dad.

When my buddies and I got home from school it was still three hours till supper and we spent most of it either in chores or in sandlot baseball. We didn't have the destructive luxuries of video games or the Internet, so we played street hockey or shot baskets. I was too short to be good at basketball but I was a tiger as a second baseman.

Mom would call (call, not phone) about 6:30 - earlier in the winter - and we sat around a table and ate food she had prepared. Vegetables and stuff. Not soaked in grease and picked up from the drive-by calorie factory on the corner.

Experts tell us we are producing a generation of kids who are destined to die younger than their parents did. How creative are you at getting your kids off the path of least resistance and onto the path of healthy habits? That's part of Rare Kids; Well Done, too.

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

"Isakson's idea to use 401(k) funds on home loans is ridiculous. We can't let people use their own money without a penalty!"



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 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. 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.org. 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/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.

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