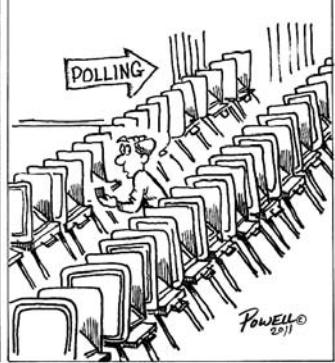


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

"I felt like I needed some time by myself ..."

"...so I came to vote in an off-year election."



The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The history of human-kind is a story of scientific discovery and technological innovation. We strive to make manifest what we create in our imagination, and since our imagination travels faster than the speed of light, much of what we have achieved in technology has been in pursuit of speed. Faster cars on bigger roads speed us to our destinations. We communicate and we are informed instantly (and constantly.) Speed and efficiency has made our work more productive. With all of this innovation, one would think that we would have more time to enjoy the pleasures of life, time for family and friends, time for recreation and relaxation. It hasn't worked out that way for most of us. Instead of being freed by the technology which brings us all things faster and faster, we have become addicted to that technology. Instead of having more time, we are pursued by time.

Yesterday I witnessed a sad example of a family pursued by time. Driving over the mountain from Helen to Hiawassee, I saw a vehicle with a Towns County license plate repeatedly crossing the center line as it "rode the bumper" of the vehicle in front of it. The lead vehicle had an out of state license tag and it was being driven by an older couple obviously in vacation mode. They were traveling the posted speed limit and judging by the camera held by the passenger, they were enjoying the fall colors. The driver of the chase car repeatedly "charged" the vehicle in front, running dangerously close to its bumper while he gestured rudely at the other driver. In the back seat of the chase car you could see the top of two small heads. The children were not enjoying the fall foliage. They were watching a video on one of those pull down screens designed to pacify passengers on those unbearably slow journeys we must often take in our world of technological wonder.

The vacationing couple eventually pulled over onto the side of the road as our modern family sped off in pursuit of their urgent needs. Many of us who have lived here long enough to collect

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.

a few fairs, festivals and fall color seasons under our belts might sympathize with the impatient family. It can be a challenge to navigate our roads in pursuit of anything when our progress is blocked at every turn by someone with more time than we have. A friend who worked in Helen had a bumper sticker which read, "I AM NOT on vacation," which unfortunately mirrors the attitude which many of us have towards the people who support what is left of our local economy.

Granted, this was a mild case of "road rage" compared to some of the incidents which frequently occur in large cities. It is sad that these incidents occur anywhere. However, in an area such as ours, where we have made a conscious choice to live here specifically because of the more relaxed lifestyle and slower pace, such an incident is almost tragic. The implication is that the gestalt of the age of instant (and again we emphasize constant) information is now ubiquitous. It has reached into every corner of American life. There is no escape.

...to be continued



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

Five hundred miles from home

Running is a very popular form of exercise today. Sometimes I put my mind in reverse going back sixty or sixty-five years and recall my childhood days when I ran barefoot almost everywhere I went. Running errands when I was a kid literally meant running. I ran paths and trails to my grandparents, aunts, uncles and to my favorite country stores, namely White's Store and Simon's Store where I bought penny candy and penny bubble gum. Being skinny and with tough calloused feet there were few of my peers who could keep up with me. Even in my seventies I still break into a run when no one is looking at an old gray-haired man. The advantage of running or engaging in some form of die exercise every day is that you die healthier. Of course, you need to do this early in the morning before your brain figures out what you are doing. I heard about an overweight fellow who decided to follow his doctor's advice to run five miles a day for the next hundred days and lose fifty pounds. After one hundred days he called his doctor complaining about his weight program. The doctor asked him if he had lost fifty pounds. His answer was yes. The doctor said, "What's the problem then?" The fellow

said, "I am five hundred miles from home!" While there are masses of people who run to have healthier minds and bodies there are other forms of running. It may be healthy to run up stairs but it is not good to run people down. There's always a segment of society that seems to run wild. They live uncontrolled lives without any restraints in an uncultivated state. They seem to be running on empty without direction or any thought of destination. They are always running afoul of man's laws and God's commandments, but they are running and making good time in destroying themselves. Then there are those very honest, sincere and enthusiastic people who are running the wrong way. They have confused the goal posts of life totally running toward the opponent's goal. Opposite of this group are those who run around like chickens with their heads cut off. They behave in a frenzied, nervous way. They are always running into a stone wall. Sad are those who run scared of life. They feel life is running a gauntlet where life is unfair and they are constantly being beaten up. We need to remember that God is running the show and it is impossible to run away from Him. We may be five hundred miles from home but God knows our whereabouts.

The writer of Hebrews 12:1-2 says ".....let us aside every weight and the sin which so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...."

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor

We have visited Towns County for the past 20 years for at least a month each year. It is truly a beautiful place.

On October 23 we lost our precious little dog. She died on the way to Blue Ridge because that is the nearest emergency or on call vet.

It is a real disservice to visitors to your area that you must drive 45 minutes when a beloved pet is in trouble but it is more troubling for the folks who live here all the time.

Could our pet have been saved if a vet had been closer? I don't know and will never know but I am sure in some cases that time would make all the difference. Local veterinarians need to get together and remedy this if they truly care about the pets they care for on a regular basis.

Mary Ellen Schmitt
South Daytona, FL

Letter to the Editor

As we enter the season of giving we would like to thank those of you who support us and encourage those of you who are not. This is a unique opportunity for you to become involved in your local community. The mission statement of the Towns County Food Pantry reads: "By The Grace of God, Towns County Food Pantry is to assure that no citizen of the Towns County goes hungry; to provide food for those in difficult circumstances, and to serve those in need with dignity and respect." The Towns County Food Pantry is a ministry of the Towns County Cooperative Ministries, Inc., a not-for-profit organization formed under the laws of the State of Georgia and recognized as a charity by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Participation in the Towns County Cooperative Ministries is open to all churches in Towns County and, currently, approximately 20 participate. All Towns County Churches are encouraged to participate and each participating Church is allowed one voting member on the board of directors. Without the ongoing support of the area churches, civic associations, and individuals the Food Pantry could not fulfill its mission because funding for the operation of the Food Pantry comes entirely from donations from them. The Food Pantry receives NO funding from the federal, state, or local government. If you or someone you know is in need of food, or would like more information about getting involved, by volunteering or making a donation, please call the Food Pantry at (706) 896-0040 or (706) 896-4783.

Teresa Stephens
Towns County Food Pantry Chair

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
By Don Jacobsen

Q: My husband and I recently divorced and I have both of the children, 4 and 6. They (especially the 6-year old) keep asking about their dad. I don't want to bad mouth him but I feel they need to know why we split up and why he's not around much anymore. My answers don't seem to satisfy them. Do you have any ideas for what I should tell them?

A: It may be that you have not heard about Dr. Don's 11th commandment for building a strong family. (We'll deal with the other ten another time.) That commandment is: Thou shalt not speak negatively about thy spouse. Not ever. Not to anyone.

First, at their ages, all they need to hear from you is something like, "Daddy and mommy decided not to live together anymore so everyone would be happier." You can fine tune that and expand on it as time goes by but that's all they need right now.

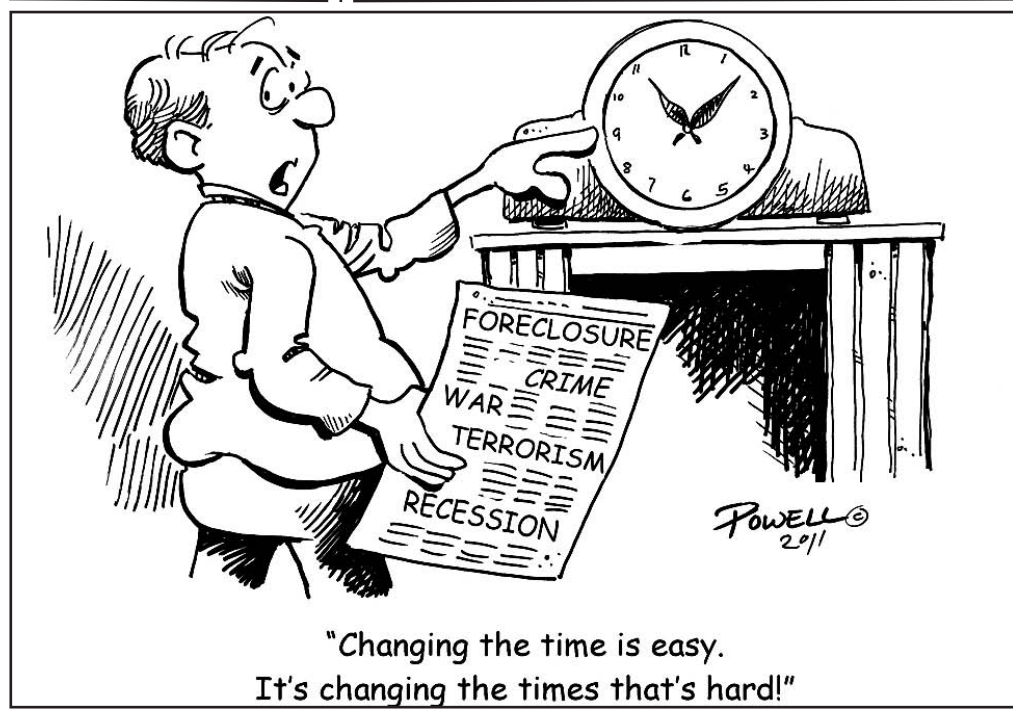
What will be most helpful to them is to hear their mom be positive, upbeat, and taking the high road. They do

not need to hear from you all the reasons why the marriage didn't work. They need to know there is love in their family and that they have a happy, stable place to grow up.

This is when you need to model how people can have serious disagreements but still respect each other. This is when they can begin to learn what forgiveness - even painful forgiveness - means. They will need to receive it all their lives, from God and from others, and now they can see it at work. They will also need to give it to others, and mom is illustrating how that looks.

And remember, the same principle applies regarding your other friends, too. I urge you to take the high road and not try to justify your part in the break-up by describing what a jerk your ex is. It's none of their business anyway, and you don't need to explain anything to them. A simple "We just decided this is best for everyone" is the only explanation you need.

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



"Changing the time is easy. It's changing the times that's hard!"

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

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, mtnregartscraftsguild.org, mtnregartscraftsguild@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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OFFICE LOCATED AT 446 NORTH MAIN STREET "THE MALL" HIAWASSEE (706) 896-4454
Publication Number 635540. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points.

EMAIL Address: tcherald@windstream.net

POSTMASTER: Send change of address to: TOWNS COUNTY HERALD P.O. BOX 365 HIAWASSEE, GEORGIA 30546

DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWS COPY & ADVERTISING
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TOWNS COUNTY (1 YEAR) \$15
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