

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

What's In a Name?

When the notion first invaded my brain, I was unsure just what differentiates a road from a street. After consulting the digital age equivalent of the Funk & Wagnall, oft mentioned reference tome from TV's old program, Laugh In, I learned that roads run between points, two towns for example. In each of those towns streets are found: paved roads lined with houses and other buildings. Roads can be forked, muddied, rutted, diverge into yellow woods, and less traveled. Chickens have raised questions of road crossing for years. Streets can be sunny or shady sided, wrong or right sided, easy, or paved with gold, so I'm told. Lanes? Boulevards? Avenues? We're not going down those paths now.

The English bard, William Shakespeare, asked how a name can affect a nose. Well, I'll be dipped in chicken fat if I know. Would a rose smell as sweet if it were named Skunk Cabbage? Sure it would but some nose owners might not go near enough to learn that fact. As a permanent newcomer to Towns County, I'm flummoxed by some thoroughfare names. It is easy to understand names given to honor loved ones or former property owners and their families. There must have been lots of Plotts from around here These folks have not only roads but a hound dog breed bearing their name. The area now occupied by part of Lake Chatuge was once owned by the Lloyed family and the name is seen frequently. Berrong, Mathis, Eller, Bradshaw, Hooper, Shook, Chastain, and many other settlers' surnames are common on Towns County road signs. If I have forgotten to cite anyone who should have been cited, it isn't a slight. To keep track I would need a memory upgrade installed in my head. Besides, I've only lived here 10 and a half years, paying taxes and being a good citizen.

I don't understand if Bear Meat Road means that one can purchase bear bacon and steak for human consumption there, or that if traveling up that road one may be fed to the cubs. On a couple of days when I felt particularly brave, I risked it. My offspring aren't orphans at this writing. Shake Rag Road, it was explained to me, came about as a signal to "shiners" that the Revenuers were on the prowl. It may or may not be true but I like the story so I hope it is. Several tales have been told about Bug Scuffle Road. One or two are possible but I hope there is one that was made-up by a dad with leg pulling in mind.

Towns County, on first glance, may appear laid back and languid. Don't be fooled. Lake waters run deep.

Around Towns
Dale Harmon



Oxen are slow, but Earth is Patient

It was Sunday afternoon and we were waiting to turn right onto a divided highway. Vehicles kept coming in the right lane just frequently enough to extend our stay at the intersection.

"It doesn't look like anyone is going to give us a break," my wife said, "but we're not in a hurry."

"It's a sign of the times," said that voice in my head, the one that reads too much mainstream media.

The situation gave me pause to consider, and since I had the time to consider, sitting there at the intersection with my blinker on, I did.

If we only had a system for driver taxonomy, it might be possible to divide most drivers into two main families: Those who consciously contribute to the safe and efficient flow of traffic – and those who prefer to get where they are going before anyone else, by whatever means necessary.

I think there has probably always been such a division, even when the "drivers" were driving oxen to pull carts. "I have to get to the market before all the best goods are sold," said one angry driver, laying the whip to his ox. "The oxen are slow, but the earth is patient," said the farmer, shaking his head, bemused.

Not too many years ago, an observant driver seeing me waiting to turn onto a divided highway might have signaled a lane change and given me space in the right lane. The same driver, if he noticed he had a line of cars behind him going over the mountain, would have used one of the many turnouts available to facilitate such a courtesy.

He wouldn't dream of tailgating someone in front of him, especially when that driver was behind a line of cars impossible to pass safely.

But what we all know that this kind of highway courtesy (and that is courtesy but another form of common sense) is increasingly rare, and those of us who have time to consider such things, might ask why.

"City folk," says the voice, and he sounds just like the memorable line spat out by Jack Palance's character, Curly, in the movie, "City Slickers." The voice has obviously forgotten the number of years we spent living in cities, but he may be onto something.

If you have lived in a city, or spent much time on Interstate highways, then you are aware of the level of aggression on the roads there that is so common that it isn't even considered aggression.

When there are more people living in a given area, then there is less to go around of many of the things we value in the country. There is less space. There is less privacy. There is less time.

A friend from the city visited me for a long weekend. He spends several hours every day on 285 getting to work and back. As he was driving us to dinner one evening, I noticed that he attached himself to the bumper of every vehicle in front of us.

When I mentioned this to him, I realized that he was totally oblivious (though he couldn't understand why many of the cars in front of him were suddenly slowing down).

He wasn't in a hurry. He wasn't angry; in fact, he was chatting away happily during the whole trip. It was simply that his behavior on the road was common, perhaps even necessary where he lives. (Tailgating can be a sign of impatience, but it also prevents the idiot whipping his ox from pulling his cart into the narrow space between you and the driver in front of you and causing you and all the drivers behind you to slam on the brakes.)

Life moves faster than it did, and not just in the cities. There are more of us everywhere, even in the country.

Several generations now have been conditioned to expect a constant progression of "more and faster," faster cars, faster computers, faster food.

We are all a little fast and a little furious. A little courtesy would go a long way toward improving the flow of things, but the dominant paradigm, thanks to a culture steeped in marketing, is about competition, not cooperation.

"I think those drivers aren't letting us in because they're distracted," said my wife. "They all seem to be looking down at something and not up at the road. They're probably texting."

She was probably right, and they won't print what my "inside voice" had to say about that.

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.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Blueberries

I think that most people enjoy eating a handful of blueberries. Eating them always reminds me of my grandfather because he always puts them on his cereal in the morning. Blueberries grow pretty well here, but there are a few things to be aware of so let's talk about those so that you can have a successful blueberry crop.

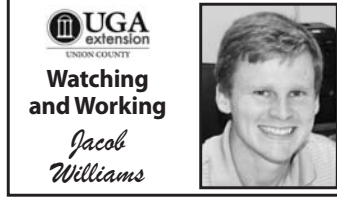
Blueberry bushes can be planted in the early spring or in the fall. In North Georgia, the most common type of blueberry planted is rabbiteye. There are many different varieties of rabbiteye blueberries, ranging from early to late season in ripeness. If you plant a rabbiteye variety, it is important to make sure that you plant more than one variety, as they need to be able to cross-pollinate to bear fruit. Northern highbush is another type of blueberry that can grow here. They are self-fertile, but they require more maintenance. Rabbiteye blueberries are native to Georgia.

If you are selecting a site to plant blueberries, choose a place that will receive full sun for at least half a day. They can grow in shady spots, but the fruit production will be less. Blueberries like soil with a pH of 4.5 – 5.2. This trait makes them well adapted to native soils because most of our soils will naturally be in that range. Therefore, lime is probably not needed when planting blueberries. Rabbiteyes do best with 5 – 6 feet between plants in row and 11 – 12 feet between rows. When planting make sure you don't plant too deep. After planting prune back 1/3 to 1/2 of the plant. This will cause the plant to focus on developing its root system. The first year you want to pick off any blooms, because you want the plant to put its energy into growing roots and not fruit. You can apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 after the plant has begun to put on leaves the first year. The second year after planting put out 2 oz. of 10-10-10 in March and July. Make sure not to over fertilize blueberries, as that can harm them. After the third season, apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 per foot of height on the bush.

Blueberry bushes do require pruning each year. Once plants reach 6 feet high you'll want to start cane renewal pruning. This means removing 1 – 3 of the biggest canes each winter at ground level. Over a period of 5 years the bush will be completely renewed. New canes are going to bear more fruit than old canes so it's important to maintain this pruning process. If you have bushes that haven't been pruned for a few years, it might take several seasons to get bushes into the 5-year rotation. After you've picked the fruit, you can top plants if they are over 6 feet tall. This will keep bushes at a more manageable height.

Blueberries aren't bothered by many insects or diseases. However, one disease to look out for is mummy berry. It will cause berries to shrivel up and drop. The berries that drop carry the pathogen over to the next year. Therefore, it's important to keep the space beneath your bushes sanitary. Remove any old berries, wood, and leaves. Placing thick mulch around the base of plants will help prevent the disease from spreading as well. Captan is an effective fungicide at controlling mummy berry if it's sprayed at bud break and first flower.

If you have questions about growing blueberries contact your local Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



Letters to The Editor

Cycling and Road Safety

Dear Editor,
Recently a cyclist was hit by an automobile and killed on Highway 76 at Swanson Mountain (Young Harris, GA). A few years ago, Southern Appalachian Bicycling Association (SABA) representatives lobbied GDOT to add bike lanes to Highway 76, as well as additional pedestrian crosswalks, without success. GDOT recently increased the danger to cyclists by adding "rumble bars" while repaving Highway 76 over Swanson Mountain, forcing cyclists into the road. Obeying the laws by both cyclists and drivers, as well as common courtesy and patience, will go a long way in preventing future tragedies from occurring. Georgia law requires a driver of an automobile to leave a "Safe Distance" of three (3) feet when overtaking and passing a bicycle. In North Carolina, the "Safe Distance" is four (4) feet. In Georgia and North Carolina, cyclists are required to obey all laws as required of automobiles and have the legal right to ride on the road.

This tragic accident should not be repeated. The Southern Appalachian Bicycling Association (SABA) is an advocate for safe road cycling and obeying all rules of the road. We will continue to enforce biking safety rules for cyclists within our community. Awareness and obeying the laws are essential for the safety of everyone in "Sharing the Road". It should not take the death of a pedestrian or cyclist to change the design of our roads.

Noel Turner, SABA
For additional information regarding SABA and bicycling in our area, visit our website at sabacycling.com. The Southern Appalachian Bicycle Association is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization.

Climate Change: A Manufactured Hoax

Dear Editor,
Responding to the letter of April 10, Climate Change: Another Proposed Solution, the same author as written this and several other letters to various papers in this area of GA and NC trying to sell readers on the contrived and false idea that humanity faces annihilation from climate change and greenhouse gasses. Yes, we are experiencing climate change. The earth's climate has been constantly changing for millions of years but not because of what mankind is doing. Our Creator, in His infinite wisdom, causes the earth to experience these changes for His purpose, and there's nothing man can do but adapt to these natural occurrences. I see this as Socialist propaganda aimed at robbing our freedoms and controlling the wealth after they have gained control of government.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Bill in the House, that he mentions, would cost us in higher production and consumer fuel costs. As for the monthly dividend check to each U.S. citizen, who in their right mind would believe this would happen? This is the Democrat's idea to sell you on a far left, socialist agenda to control our lives. This is not an alternative to the Green New Deal, it's a part of it. Instead of trying to sell us on the whole package, they're attempting to start selling us little pieces at a time until one day we wake up to discover we're been tricked and consumed by the whole Deal. Nice try!

Roger King

Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!
Contact us at 706-896-4454
Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM



Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	Every Thursday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Every Friday: Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Hospital Auxiliary	Third Monday of each month: Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	6 pm
MOAA	Michael email mva62sga@brmemc.net	
YH Plan Comm.	Third Tuesday of each month: YH City Hall	5:30 pm
Co. Comm. Mtg	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Blairsville store	5:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 pm
Quilting Bee	Third Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
Book Bunch & Lunch	Daniels Steakhouse	11:30 am
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month: Clubhouse	6 pm
Republican Party	Civic Center	5:30 pm
Goldwing Riders	Third Saturday of each month: Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
Red Cross DAT	Fourth Monday of each month: 1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Lions Club	Fourth Tuesday of each month: Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Hiaw. Writers	Fourth Thursday Hiaw. Pk. Comm. Rm.	10:30
Hiaw. Garden Club	Clubhouse	12:45 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Last Thursday of each month: Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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Towns County Herald

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