

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## The Times They Are A-changing

My father-in-law was a very smart man. He was both educated and intuitive. Over the many years of kinship and friendship we shared, I sought his council and advice on oodles of things. From how to retrieve an antique Old Spice bottle dropped and wedged into a toilet bowl, to making the very best vanilla ice cream with a custard base and plenty of hand cranking. Yum. Sometimes, ok, many times, he sort of over explained. When my mother-in-law noticed glazing in the eyes of the recipient of her husband's sage solutions, she would say, ever so politely, "John, she asked the time, not how to make a watch." He would laugh and get back on track. Flip that coin. If one wears a watch to know the time, one should know how to wind said watch or how to have the battery changed. Of course now, for the most part, we use cell phones to tell us the time, temperature, truth and lies.

Change happens. Sometimes rapidly and sometimes gently. Heck, before train travel, time was told by the sun. Work when light. Sleep when dark. Simple enough and Bob's your uncle. Oh yeah, and die of old age at 45. Without change, many of us wouldn't be living on borrowed, but stolen time.

Vaccines to prevent polio, shingles, flu, TB and a myriad of other maladies are changes which have been embraced by most. There are some who won't, for reasons of their own, use vaccinations.

There is change in the air. Not just those gratefully cool mountain mornings teasing us with upcoming fall. Changes in our community are evident. The bass and pickle ball tournaments are relatively new changes which have proven a boon to Towns County's economy. The flap and buzz about sea planes is a hot issue with pro and con positions, as are all ideas. We live in The United States of America where peaceful debate is allowed and welcomed.

Sears and Roebuck Company, later known as just Sears, was an American institution almost forever. There are legions of reasons for its downfall. Perhaps coming into the digital age late in the game, requiring only Sears credit cards, diversification, buying and selling brand names and companies, poor management, Amazon, and even a "We've always done it that way" attitude were contributors.

The laws of our country have fallen far behind the rapid changes of science. I feel sure most of our forefathers never thought about the custody of frozen embryos or retinal and DNA identification. Well, Ben Franklin might have.

That Towns County is changing is fact, not surmise. We can control or have anarchy. What'll it be?

The death of my father-in-law was a change. It couldn't be stopped but was kept at bay for 98 years. I'm thankful for the useful knowledge and warm memories given freely by one heck of a man.

See you around Towns.

**Around Towns**

*Dale Harmon*



## In Real Time

We welcome our visitors from the coast this week. No one in the world is more hospitable than you neighbors from the low country, and I think you'll find mountain folk no less welcoming. Our hearts go out to everyone worried about what's happening back home, and to the ones who didn't make it this far to enjoy the sunny days and cool nights of late summer in the mountains. Who didn't spent at least some time watching the weather over the holiday weekend, or clicking on the spaghetti models on their computer, or checking the weather app on their phone? Big storms are big media events. There's no denying that technology has given us tools for providing life saving information like storm warnings and evacuation notices. That's not what we're here to discuss this week.

What troubles us is the ability of media through technology to tap into our voyeuristic instincts. Whenever an event provides sufficient drama, millions of people now watch it unfold in "real time." If the event requires a bit of extra dramatization to capture more viewers, some of our information providers are adept at providing that as well. Drama is addictive, and like any drug, it requires higher and higher doses to provide the same buzz. Witness the constant local, regional and national real time crime and misfortune reports that we barely notice unless the level of drama is high enough. To the normal challenges of daily life we now add a constant exposure to stress hormones injected by our habitual consumption of media.

For tens of thousands of years humans experienced the passage of time much differently than we do today, or perhaps more accurately, we passed through time in a different manner. Time was reckoned by seasons, the phases of the moon or the gradual movement of celestial bodies long before the calendar was invented. The invention of clocks began the divorce proceedings between humanity and the natural world. The second hand was a tiny but powerful sword slicing away bits of time from our lives with death by a thousand cuts.

For all our ability to measure time in ever smaller increments, however, we seem to have lost time rather than gained it. The general consensus is that life is short and time moves ever more swiftly, and I'll wager you that twelve moons of our ancestor's time was considerably longer than our year divided into nanoseconds. The problem with our obsession with "real time" events is that for everyone watching, those events aren't real at all. Every advance in communication technology enables us to spend more time in virtual reality, and every advance in the science of marketing ensures that we do. Our awareness of here and now is surrendered to outside influences, and we gradually lose the ability to host that awareness ourselves.

So let's look back at the holiday weekend we enjoyed here in the mountains. Did you notice the clear blue skies? Did you enjoy the cool nights? Did you spend your time in the sunshine or in the virtual reality of tropical force winds and rain while you tweeted your thoughts and prayers and posted your concern online? Did your weekend pass by too quickly? I'll bet you that the weekend was much longer for the people sitting in traffic on an evacuation route.

Civilization in the developed world bathes in stress hormones with a consciousness focused on real time events in virtual reality. We perceive time much differently than our ancestors. How this will change us is as unpredictable as the computer generated spaghetti models of a hurricane.

**The Middle Path**  
By: Don Perry  
onthemiddlepath.com

## Lichens

Have you seen moss growing on trees? Lichen is the term used for the blue green, papery growth that is often found on the bark of trees and other perennials.

Sometimes folks are concerned over the growth of lichen, because they think it may be damaging their tree. Let's talk about what lichens are, what causes them, and what you can do to control them.

Lichens are really made up of a couple of different organisms. They usually will have a fungus and an algae. These organisms work together in a relationship that is mutually beneficial. Together these organisms produce the thallus, which is the leaf like growth that people see and recognize as lichen.

Each organism has its own role in the relationship. The fungus provides a physical structure for growth, because the algae is slimy and has no structure. The fungus also provides water and minerals from the air or the material that the lichen is growing on. The algae are capable of photosynthesis, so they provide the carbohydrates needed for life. Some algae are also able to pull nitrogen from the atmosphere that the lichen need for development. Together they are able to combine and sustain life.

Lichens grow all over the world. Different species will grow on different surfaces. For instance lichen that you see on a rock will not grow on a tree. Different colors are also possible. Lichen will begin to grow more on a plant if that plant has lost some of its leaves.

When leaves fall from a tree, more sunlight is able to penetrate to the branches and trunk of the tree that will enable to growth of more lichen. Lichen is an opportunistic grower, meaning that healthy, actively growing plants will not have as much lichen on them.

If there is an abundant amount of lichen on a plant that means there could be something that is stressing your plant, allowing the opportunistic lichen to grow. That could be a nutritional deficiency, a root disease, or an insect pest among other things.

Lichen does not kill plants. An abundant amount of lichen can be an indicator that something else is affecting the plant. There are not any products that are recommended for use on lichen that is also safe for plants. Products that you spray to kill lichen have potential to damage the plant it's hanging onto. You can remove lichen manually by gently scraping it from the bark. If you see a tree that has a lot of lichen growing on it carefully examine the plant.

Here are some things to look for. Has the plant already lost its leaves? Are there holes in the bark from insects boring? Has the plant been receiving enough water? Are the roots turning black or are there mushrooms growing around the base of the tree? These are all questions that will help you determine if your plant is in decline and get to the root of the issue.

If you have questions about lichen growing on your plants contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

On September 26, Union County Extension is hosting a Radon Education Program at 5:30 in the Union County Civic Center. Call 706-439-6030 or Email me to RSVP.

The Towns-Union Master Gardeners are having their annual Fall Plant Sale on September 28 at the Union County Farmers Market.

Stop by to get some perennial plants that are adapted to our climate.



**Watching and Working**  
*Jacob Williams*

## Letters to The Editor

### Time to Move Forward

Dear Editor,  
What are we afraid of? Why do so many cling to the past? Can we not see that life changes, times change, and we either have to adapt or be left behind? We should be grateful for all the progress that fossil fuels have brought us, but now it is time to look ahead and see that there is now a better way. The damage from burning fossil fuels is becoming more obvious every day, and almost all experts agree that they have to be put aside for something better. With all our technological advances, we now have the opportunity to rapidly switch from fossil fuels to wind, solar, and other alternative energy sources while at the same time creating millions of new jobs and expanding our economy. Presently, China is beating the US in the Green Energy Revolution and creating millions of new jobs in the process. We cannot allow that to continue! Now is the time to contact our Congressmen and tell them we want them to take strong action to combat climate change and lead America to a new age of prosperity. We are America, and we can meet this challenge!

Vernon Dixon, MD

### Due to Fossil Fuels

Dear Editor,  
As Paul Harvey used to say, "Here is the rest of the story" about the truth of global warming. Our politicians have been talking about global warming and reducing all sources of burning fossil fuels that produce carbon dioxide, which is greenhouse gas. A sudden stoppage of burning fossil fuels is not very practical because we cannot make enough energy without using such fuels. Water power, nuclear power, solar power and wind power cannot replace our fuels and supply enough energy for our needs.

You can research the decrease in the strength of our magnetosphere around Earth, which is causing more global warming than carbon dioxide. The poles of Earth are changing as our magnetic North Pole is moving 40 miles a year toward Russia. During this polar shift, the strength of our magnetosphere will decrease, and it is decreasing 5% every 10 years.

This is a big story that overshadows all of our attempts to stop burning fossil fuels.

The carbon credits are a hoax to control nations. The sun is heating up the Earth more, which overshadows any green plan.

Richard Lee

**Have something to sell?**  
Let the Herald work for you!



**Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM • 706-896-4454**



THE DAY THE WORLD CHANGED

### 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.*

## Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	<b>Every Monday:</b> All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	<b>Every Tuesday:</b> Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	<b>Every Wednesday:</b> Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	<b>Every Thursday:</b> All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	<b>Every Friday:</b> Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	<b>Every Sunday:</b> Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alzheimer's Supp.	<b>First Tuesday of each month:</b> McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	6 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	<b>First Wednesday of each month:</b> McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	<b>First Thursday of each month:</b> Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Chamber Board	<b>Second Monday of each month:</b> 1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
VFW	VFW Post	5 pm
Historical Society	Hist. Soc. Bldg.	5:30 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Conv./Vis. Bureau	<b>Second Tuesday of each month:</b> Civic Center	8 am
Gem & Mineral Club	Senior Center	1:30 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Church	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm

## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

<b>Kenneth West</b> Owner/Publisher	<b>Shawn Jarrard</b> Editor	<b>Mark Smith</b> Staff Writer	<b>Chad Stack</b> Sports
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