

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Leaders Make Leaders

By Yonatan Hamburger and Tzali Reicher

In an era marked by soaring levels of anxiety and plummeting self-esteem, closely linked to the surge of social media and the voyeuristic observation of others' performative lives aimed at garnering 'likes', many Americans find themselves disempowered, inferior and adrift.

This sentiment was entirely foreign to the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory, the most influential leader in modern Jewish history.

This past weekend marked a special day for world Jewry. Communities around the world marked the anniversary of the day the Rebbe accepted the leadership of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement in 1951 and became the architect of the post-Holocaust Jewish renaissance.

His remarkable accomplishments endure as a testament to his legacy, even 29 years after his passing. He orchestrated the dispatch of over 4,000 rabbinic couples to lead communities in 80 countries worldwide, a feat that remains unparalleled. Additionally, his influence extends to scholarship, with a prodigious library boasting hundreds of published books covering a wide array of topics – from Judaism to international affairs. These publications were curated from the extensive material derived from the literal tens of thousands of hours the Rebbe spent addressing the public.

Throughout his lifetime, a diverse array of statesmen and artists, including Ronald Reagan, Robert F. Kennedy, Yitzchak Rabin, Menachem Begin, Elie Wiesel, and Bob Dylan, sought his counsel, underscoring the breadth of his impact. The reverberations of his achievements continue to be widely celebrated. Every year on the Rebbe's birthday, every U.S. president, starting with President Jimmy Carter, has designated Education Day U.S.A. to honor his unwavering commitment to education, and in 1994, Congress bestowed upon the Rebbe the prestigious Gold Medal – the only rabbi to ever receive this honor.

As time progresses following the Rebbe's passing, his significance and appreciation have grown. Each year witnesses the release of numerous books about him and his wisdom, and an increasing number of rabbis – many even born after his passing – operate in his name, venturing to remote areas to connect with Jewish individuals and communities wherever they may be. His resting place is revered as a site of profound spiritual sanctity. Hundreds of thousands of individuals, both Jews and non-Jews, visit this sacred location every year, seeking blessings, spiritual guidance, and inspiration, including leaders such as New York Mayor Eric Adams, President of Argentina Javier Milei, and personalities including supermodel Naomi Campbell, basketball great Lamar Odom and popstar Paula Abdul.

The question is obvious. How did a Russian-born immigrant rabbi, who spent his last 40 years essentially in a three block radius in Brooklyn, inspire such devotion and following that has only grown and spread around the world since he passed?

The answer might be found in this thought the late great Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks of the United Kingdom used to say: "I had been told that the Rebbe was a man with thousands of followers. After I met him, I understood that the opposite was the case. A good leader creates followers. A great leader creates leaders. More than the Rebbe was a leader, he created leadership in others."

From the moment he accepted the leadership in the small Brooklyn synagogue from which he would go on to change the face of world Jewry over the next four decades, the Rebbe addressed his personal philosophy about the need for leaders to empower and lift up others in his opening address, which he labeled his mission statement.

The Rebbe challenged the common expectation that followers could passively delegate all responsibilities to their appointed leaders, emphasizing that nominal connections to individuals of higher status or spiritual standing didn't exempt them from personal effort. The Rebbe's leadership style involved guiding and assisting his followers, but he insisted they must invest their own effort to attain spiritual and material heights.

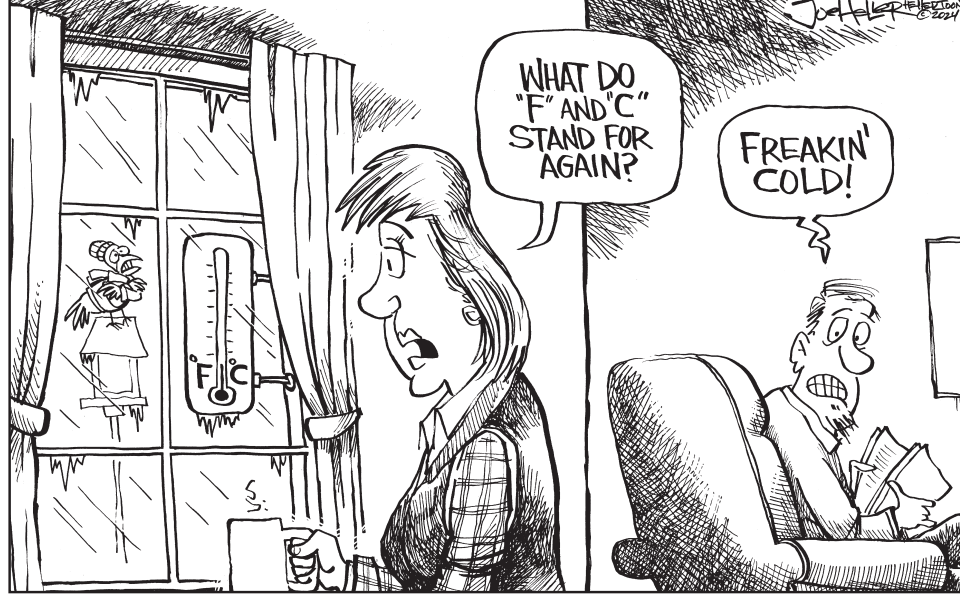
In numerous meetings and letters, the Rebbe uplifted and motivated those who believed they had reached their limits, whether proud achievers or those lost and despondent. His consistent message was clear: there is always more one can do, and no one has yet come close to tapping into their ultimate potential that G-d has blessed us with.

This message holds particular significance in our present age, dominated by our enslavement to devices that have eroded our G-d-given attention spans and civic ethics. Whether feeling unaccomplished, lazy or overly content with past achievements, the Rebbe's empowering message of continuous growth and possibilities resonates: we must be leaders who foster more leaders, thereby cultivating further success. There is always room for improvement, and we can always do more to make the world a better place for all.

Yonatan Hamburger is an Atlanta-based rabbi with Chabad of Rural Georgia, while Tzali Reicher is a rabbi and writer currently residing in New York.



Echos from Sinai
"Torah for Everyone"
Rabbi Yonatan Hamburger

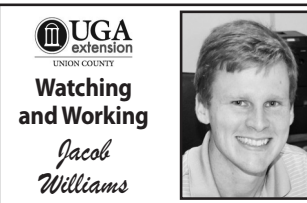


Radon Awareness

January is national radon action month. Many Georgians spend these cold months huddled inside waiting for a warmer spring.

This makes it even more important that we test our homes for radon, a colorless, odorless gas that is the second leading cause of lung cancer.

In Union county, about 46% of homes have elevated levels of the naturally radioactive gas radon. In Towns County, it is 36%. Over the course of many years, exposure to this gas can cause lung cancer even in non-smokers. In fact, radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Smokers, current and former, exposed to radon gas have an even greater risk of developing lung cancer.



Wegotcha

My old friends Mr. Paul Reed Smith and Mr. Washburn spend more time collecting dust than making music these days, but there was a time when they were busy almost every night. I think every American who ever owned a guitar, whether that instrument was a PRS or an air guitar, has entertained at least a moment of rock and roll fantasy or delusions of grandeur.

Some of us may even achieve a level of proficiency which, had we been blessed by that rare combination of luck and perseverance could have led to some kind of notoriety, but most discover the harsh truth that talent does not equal fame in plenty of time to choose a career path that builds a sturdier roof over our heads.

Of course some of us stick with it just for the love of the music, and I suspect that the dustiest guitars were wielded less for love and more for ego. But had I but known how far marketing companies, supercharged by technology, would go in using music to help condition us for consumption, I could probably have made a go of it as a professional musician composing disease music. Bear with me.

Yesterday we were puttering around the house in the evening and the television was on while we waited for the weather during the nightly shooting report. Unfortunately the remote was hiding under a sofa cushion and the mute button was temporarily unavailable, but had I been in possession of it I likely would have missed, well, there is no other way to describe it than to say, "the disease opera."

This grand production celebrating an amazing pill was fully orchestrated. Dozens of dancers moved in tightly choreographed routines. Everyone was laughing and smiling as they sang over the disclaimers in the tiny font at the bottom of the screen and the intermittent auctioneer voice describing the side effects. "If you're allergic to Wegotcha, stop taking Wegotcha."

The tune was catchy and stuck in my head. It joins a growing collection of disease music residing there, like that lively tune from the commercial where a woman is living the good life because she takes Placebix. She wakes up with a smile that beams like the sunlight streaming in through her bedroom window. She throws back the covers and dances into the kitchen where the coffee is already waiting. In the next verse, she flows into town spreading joy, pats the dog on the head, helps the elderly man with his package, rescues the kids' basketball and scores a three pointer on her way to the restaurant to join her ethnically diverse group of friends for a celebratory meal.

"I could write this stuff" I often think when I hear the repetitive tunes designed to occupy memory cells better utilized in remembering where I put the remote. Apparently there is a great demand for disease music because there are so many more diseases now, and so many more drugs to treat them. Each one needs a song to help us remember that living the good life depends on getting just the right prescription. I wonder what rhymes with "Mortalis," "Endital," and "Noasatal?"

Of course the good life requires us to consume much more than just prescription drugs. We have many other needs, like cottage cheese. Apparently I'm buying the wrong one. No one at our house stares dreamily into the distance while we slowly savor the delicate little white curds. No one strikes up a tune or dances across the kitchen between bites.

Marketing companies know that music is to memory like a shoehorn is to a tight loafer. They've known this for a long time, as anyone can tell you who still remembers commercial jingles from decades ago.

Sometimes it's a challenge to navigate the myriad consumption choices required to achieve the buona vita. The triple-decker burger good-life-music is really catchy, but I have a feeling I need to hum the cottage cheese music more often so I can avoid dancing to the tune of Endital.

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

Radon is a naturally occurring gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in soil and rock. Often granite rock naturally has high levels of uranium, which is part of why radon is such a persistent problem in Georgia, the gas seeps out of the soil and up through crawlspaces, foundations, and basements into a home. About 800 Georgians die annually from radon induced lung cancer.

Fortunately, testing for radon gas is simple and inexpensive. You hang a short-term radon test in the lowest living level of your home for three to seven days, and then mail it to the laboratory for analysis. In a few days, you will receive the test results. If the radon level in your home is high (4 picocuries per liter or above), you can have a certified radon mitigation professional install a radon reduction system that will reduce the indoor radon level. The system most frequently used is a vent pipe system and fan that pulls radon from beneath the house and vents it to the outside.

A radon test kit can be obtained from the UGA Radon Program (radon.uga.edu) or many hardware stores. You can also purchase a radon test kit at the Union or Towns county Extension office for \$16. Testing for radon is very easy and effective, and I recommend it to anyone that has purchased a home or is living in a home that has not been tested.

Radon may also be found in drinking water. This is primarily a concern with private well water. In Georgia, wells drilled into granitic crystalline rock aquifers, usually in the northern part of the state, are at risk of naturally occurring radon contamination. This is where the uranium that decays to radon can be found at higher levels. To learn more about radon in water in your county visit <https://aesl.ces.uga.edu/water/map/>. If you are interested in radon in water, test kit contact your County Extension Office.

Radon is a real concern for where we live. Thankfully, more and more people have become aware of the problem that it presents. Mitigating radon in home that has finished construction can be expensive. If you are in the process of building a home consider installing a mitigation system, as it is cheaper to have the system installed before a house is completed. If you have questions about radon, you can contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.williams@uga.edu.

Letters To The Editor

Meth and Fentanyl

Dear Editor,
Methamphetamine is a potent stimulant that has the potential to cause delusions, hallucinations, and paranoia. Meth causes people to stay up late, which leads to this negative behavior. Some people might believe that methamphetamine overdose is practically unheard of. The problem is that although methamphetamine overdoses are uncommon, they have recently peaked.

Heroin and cocaine are the most typical ingredients in speedballs. Numerous people have died as a result of speedballing, including Chris Farley, River Phoenix and John Belushi. It still applies even though Farley died from morphine and cocaine while Belushi and Phoenix died from heroin and cocaine. However, fentanyl has made it much deadlier recently. The increase in overdoses is caused by the addition of fentanyl to drugs.

Up to 50 times as potent as heroin and 100 times as potent as morphine, respectively, is fentanyl. Users are not even aware of what they are taking due to the extreme potency of fentanyl and the fact that it is added secretly to stimulants. They are unsure of why using makes them feel different.

An intense rush occurs when an opioid and a stimulant are combined. To "counteract" each drug's negative side effects, they use speedballs. Meth can make a person anxious, agitated, and paranoid, whereas fentanyl can make a person feel sleepy and have trouble staying awake. These two cancel each other out when they are combined. However, there is a higher risk when using two different drugs.

To learn what to look for, visit: <https://www.narconon-newlifetreat.org/blog/meth-and-fentanyl-the-new-speedball.html>.

Narconon can help you take steps to overcome addiction in your family. Call today for free screenings or referrals. 1-800-431-1754.

David Long, Narconon

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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

First Monday of each month: School Board... HS/MS Media Center	6:45 pm
Every Tuesday: Storytime for Children... TC Library	10:30 am
First Tuesday of each month: Hiaw. City Council... City Hall YH City Council... YH City Hall	6 pm 6:30 pm
Second Tuesday of each month: Conventions & Visitors Board... Civic Center	8:30 am
Second Wednesday of each month: Board of Elections... Elections Office	4 pm
Third Monday of each month: Planning Commission... Temporary Courthouse	6 pm
Third Tuesday of each month: Commissioner's Mtg... Courthouse City of Young Harris Planning Commission... Meeting Room in City Hall TC Water Authority Board Meeting	5:30 pm 5 pm 6 pm

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.

Classifieds SELL!
706-896-4454



Towns County Herald

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