

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Departure

Many people come and go during our lifetime. If we tried to count the number, it would easily be in the thousands. Childhood pals, elementary, middle, high school friends, college comrades, career associates, church folks, volunteers, family members, and civic club members all have combined to help us become the individuals we are today. Even with our current remarkable wireless communication system, it would be quite impossible to maintain contact with the endless number of people.

It is obvious that we have to let go of people as we move from one life stage to another. We barely can keep up with people in our immediate circle. We claim everyone as our friends. And yet researchers claim that during our life on earth, we will have truthfully only one or two genuine true friends—individuals who know all of our strengths and weaknesses, past and present, bad and good experiences, and still loves us. If we have three, then we are the exception. Four friends? Hum-m-m-m-m-m. So, for argument sake, we will pretend that all the multitude of people we know are our genuine friends.

But there comes a time when there is a necessity to weed out carefully those individuals in our lives who are destructive. They do not add one positive element into the relationship. They can take a sunny day of ours and turn it quickly into a dismal experience. They are like a dark cloud hovering over us, and any umbrella of hope of ours to survive in the relationship is emotionally choking. We attempt to battle their onslaught of negativity and pessimistic attitudes, but inside we know that we are losing in the battle of the minds. After a visit with them, we are emotionally and physically exhausted. All of us have these types of people in our lives.

Because these individuals can be like parasites, there is a necessity to move them out of our lives if we are planning on surviving. Giving them departure papers will probably be one of the most difficult things to do. Letting go is quite like cleaning out one's attic or garage. There are those places in our homes that are filled with unsightly clutter, and when we clean out the clutter, we feel better. We feel in control. We feel happier. Some individuals in our arena represent our messy attic or garage. They clutter up our minds with negativity. They build their happiness on our unhappiness, and they have no redeeming quality that adds to our lives, only takes away. We spend so much time with them that we miss out on being with those who add precious moments to our lives.

It isn't simple to let people go, especially if we have known them for a long time. We feel uneasy and awkward. One of the discomforts is actually doing it. We have no clue how they will respond. They may feel hurt, angry, sad, and disappointed. And at that moment we may not exactly feel joyous. And yet, we know it must be done if we want to be a complete, contented, positive self.

Other feelings regarding the departure process may be fear and worry. What will be the repercussions? Will the repercussions be severe? We just don't know. Are we sure that we are doing the right thing? Questions, questions, decisions, decisions. We often pray, "God, please help me."

Letters To The Editor

A Mistake

Dear Editor,

What has gotten into local leaders who should be focused on helping area businesses and residents thrive? Towns County's decision to withdraw from the Joint Development Authority was a mistake. The strategic plan laid out by that body is a smart roadmap for growth, with many of its goals left unmet – namely housing for moderate income folks – despite Commissioner Bradshaw's insistence that the need "no longer exists." Has he checked the market lately?

Thankfully, the Mayors have the common sense to stick with the plan. There's no better person than Denise McKay to bring her genius and expertise to the area as evidenced by her regionally and nationally recognized work on the Paris Business Center on Hiwassee's Main Street. And yet the City Council is considering not funding the completion of these vital projects, which would leave these buildings half-completed and donor funds wasted, not to mention the property damage being done to the Trailful building next door.

Sticking your head in the sand won't make the future more like the past, but it's a sure-fire way to make the present harder. Don't let politics get in the way of smart decision making. Harness the inevitable growth for good.

Sincerely,
Brad Baso

A Successful Shelter

Dear Editor,

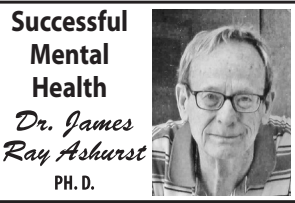
As the former Director of Humane Society's Mountain Shelter, I have resigned after 15 years of service. I would like to thank all the donors, volunteers and staff that have helped make the Mountain Shelter one of the best animal shelters in North Georgia.

The shelter started in 1987, growing into a beautiful facility helping thousands of animals find their forever homes. With the support of our thrift stores, county funding and public donations, the animals have a loving and clean, temporary home until they are adopted. Many of us have adopted a four-legged friend that means more to us than we could have ever imagined.

It was a pleasure working with Commissioner Paris, Commissioner Bradshaw and our local Sheriffs' Offices and Animal Control. It takes everyone in the community to make a successful shelter, so we should all be proud!

God Bless,
Lisa Collins

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Successful Mental Health
Dr. James Ray Ashurst
PH.D.



"I'VE COUNTED 5 VAMPIRES, 3 FRANKSTEINS, 6 ZOMBIES, 2 JASONS, A FREDDY KRUEGER AND 23 TAYLOR SWIFTS!"

Living Memory

It is the little things that make the memories we cherish. We like to tell stories of our big dramas and adventures, but we are comforted for a lifetime by much that goes unnoticed as it happens.

These souvenirs of recollection may gather dust for years, like a steamer trunk of favorite things stored in the attic, put there because we were busy, moving, reorganizing. We come across it unexpectedly one day, and when we open it up, everything in it is new again. We wonder why we kept it out of sight for so long. We may even bring out a few keepsakes for display or keep them close by now that they have been rediscovered.

In my own attic, I kept stored the sound of the rocker on a pressure cooker. My fifth-grade homework is done, and we're entertaining ourselves while our mother cooks supper. It's cold outside, and the low rumble of the ancient furnace in the basement keeps winter at bay. We're down in the workshop taking something apart to see how it functions or practicing the weird science of 11-year-olds. It is a time of innocence and discovery, and the world is a safe place. To this day, the sound of a rocker brings me comfort and gratitude.

There are many sounds stored in my trunk. Our dad's morning wake-up whistle, the slam of a screen door, late afternoon underfoot, a train whistle in the distance leaves at night, the call of mourning doves, and a rooster crowing. There are aromas. The pungent smell of an offended tomato plant when our grandmothers sends one of us to the garden, and the smell of steak o' lean cooking in her kitchen.

There are many, many images kept there. Some are accompanied by actual photos in old albums, but the memories are better. The darkness of a damp wood before dawn slowly turns gray as the fantastic images of a young hunter's imagination become ordinary roots and rocks, and then rays of light divide the mist as the sun peeks over the mountain.

I remember the tall cornstalks in the gardens of two grandfathers. Every patch of corn is a corn maze to a five-year-old. Granny Nora's crepe myrtles, Granny Cordie's roses, and my mother's chrysanthemums decorate the landscapes of the past.

Better than a recollection is a living memory. While the old family home quietly suffered in our absence, Mama's abundant chrysanthemums had all but disappeared. Tracey discovered a tiny sprig clinging to life in sun-baked sand and rescued it. She brought it home and loved it, coaxed it back to health. It survived, and then it grew. She divided it and set it out in her roadside garden.

Today that sprig is a patch 8 feet wide and over 20 feet long. It is covered with blossoms, and this time of year it's one of the last havens for pollinators of all kinds and hardy butterflies stubbornly clinging to life in the face of falling petals and approaching cold weather. Just above that patch is the living memory of Granny's rose, and its aroma is a time machine.

Youth often forsakes sentimentality. It is a sad thing, and as natural as falling leaves. But while that which is trendy rejects keepsakes and memorabilia today, that which is human still has some awareness of our mortality. Though the pace of modern life seems to accelerate with every technological innovation, we fantasize that by capturing and posting as many images as possible we can somehow slow down the march of time, or at least reclaim some of those lost moments... someday. The computer prompts us with "on this day" notifications, but those images seem sterile because often though we were there physically, our awareness had raced on ahead.

I think of the hurried woman on the beach a few years ago who hopped out of her car, motor running, to snap a few photos of the lunar eclipse with her iPod before bustling on to her next destination. When she looks at those photos, will the pixels bring back the sound of the surf, the smell of the salt air or the stillness of the night? I wonder how many of the thousands of photos we click and post will ever be seen again, and if they are, will they bring back living memories?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor
PO Box 365, Hiwassee, 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:	For Children... TC Library	10:30 am
First Tuesday of each month:	Hiaw. City Council... City Hall	6 pm
	YH City Council... YH City Hall	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	5:30 pm
	City of Young Harris Planning Commission...	
	Meeting Room in City Hall	5 pm
	TC Water Authority Board Meeting	6 pm

What to do with Wildlife?

Fall is a busy time of year for wildlife. Some animals are trying to put on the last bit of weight to help them get through winter. Deer are getting ready to begin the rut. Some wildlife we welcome, others we despise because of the destruction that they cause. This can even vary from person to person. Some people love seeing deer and bear wander through their yard. Others dislike them because of the damage that they can cause. Regardless of how you feel about wildlife, we should all strive to leave wildlife wild. Below are some ways that you can do that.

Don't feed wildlife. By feeding wildlife I mean leaving out food specifically for wildlife to eat. Most wildlife are browsers, meaning that they travel over an area to eat. In the wild, wildlife doesn't have the option of sitting down at a buffet for their meal and having all the different options in one place. Putting corn or other feed for deer or other animals is not a good practice. What is better is to plant the types of plants that would be feeding them in the wild. Trees like persimmon, black cherry, oaks, beech, and crab apple are all mast trees that are beneficial to wildlife. Wildlife also need forbs for food and cover. Forbs include plants like ragweed, pokeweed, asters, partridge peas, verbena, and others. Forbs generally need sunlight, meaning that only having woods is not ideal for wildlife. Many wildlife also need brushy areas that provide cover and food. So, if you like to feed wildlife I would strongly encourage you to plant things to create the habitat that they need not just put a bag of feed out for them. Putting out bags of food encourages wildlife's dependence on you. It also encourages the spread of disease. It forces animals to feed close together, which leads to exchanging saliva. This is a concern especially with CWD on the horizon.

If you see an injured wild animal the best course of action is to leave it alone. Rehabilitating wildlife is only allowed by people permitted the Department of Natural Resources. If you find an injured wild animal that animal is more likely to defend itself and harm you. Some diseases that wildlife have can also affect humans. If you need assistance with sick wildlife call 1-800-366-2661. This is a Georgia Department of Natural Resources number.

In the case that you find a wild animal that appears to have been orphaned, the best thing to do is leave them there. Wildlife has a much better chance at survival if it is not disturbed by people. If you are certain that the mother is dead then call a wildlife rehabilitator.

Another thing to note is that to keep any kind of wildlife you must have a permit from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. You can get permitted to be a rehabilitator, or permitted to have wildlife for educational purposes. In Georgia wildlife is "held in trust by the state for the benefit of its citizens." O.C.G.A 27-1-3 Those benefits can include a variety of uses including hunting and viewing. The fees and taxes associated with hunting and fishing make up the bulk of the conservation funds that DNR receives; making hunting and fishing a critical part of conservation, not only in Georgia, but in the United States.

If you have questions about wildlife contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu. You can also contact your regional DNR office.

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.

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 4 PM



Towns County Herald

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Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$30. Out of County (1 Year) \$40. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiwassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiwassee, GA 30546.

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Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiwassee, GA 30546