

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

Speaking of the Weather

Perhaps you noticed that 2013 was an uncommonly rainy year. At our home in Gumlog I keep a careful, day-by-day record of rainfall and recorded a total of 87 inches for 2013, the rainiest year of my life.

My records now cover six years and show the following annual results: Year Rainfall - 2008 44.2 inches; 2009 72.5 inches; 2010 47.7 inches; 2011 56.4 inches; 2012 50.0 inches; 2013 87.0 inches. Six year average (2008 thru 2013) is 59.63 inches.

Wm. Ronald Gibson

Letter to the Editor:

Historical Society needs YOU

The Towns County Historical Society is approaching an exciting time in the New Year 2014. We will now have a new home for our archives, thanks to the generosity of Commissioner Bill Kendall.

All the work equipment has been moved to the new Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Memorial Park on Mining Gap Road, part of a large building that houses two basketball courts with folding bleachers, an in-house walking trail above the courts, and other offices and community rooms.

There is much work to be done and volunteers are needed. If you can join our group and have time to help in setting up computers, displays, etc. please contact Ina Kozesky at 706-896-2559 or email her at risk2007@windstream.net dues are only \$15.

We will have election of officers at our January meeting to be held on Monday, January 13, 2014 at 5 p.m. at the new Senior Center in Hiawassee. You're invited to join us.

Towns County Historical Society
Joan Crothers, Secretary

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
By Don Jacobsen

Question: Our son is 16, going on 21. Ever since he became a teenager we have tried to give him increasing amounts of freedom, and he was more than happy to run with it.

not wise they can drive deep wedges into the relationship they want to maintain with their teen. Our parenting role doesn't quit when our kids become teens, but it changes.

Answer: He's growing up before he's ready? Or do you mean he's growing up before you're ready? When a youngster moves from about age 2 to age 3 or so mom and dad change the rules of the game and begin placing expectations on him.

When Sally is 16 and the topic of that same unsavory place comes up, the conversation needs to be different. Mom and dad might say something like, "Honey, you have to decide, but your mom and I feel it would be a bad choice."

Mom and dad want to communicate that they're seeing maturity develop in Sally, but they still want to be an influence in her life. So they may even say, "Knowing you as we do, we feel that your choice to go would not be taking you in the direction you want your life to go."

But when he reaches his teens, he changes the rules. He begins to exercise more freedom, make more decisions on his own, push the boundaries. This time the parents are distressed by the new rules of engagement, and if they're

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net. NJan8Z6CA

Cartoon by Powell 2014 showing a man holding stamps and a woman holding a stamp. Text: "You won't believe it! When I heard stamps are going up, I rushed to buy some, and there wasn't even a line yet!"

Towns County Herald
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The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Floyd Shooke was born in 1924 in a little log cabin on the headwaters of Upper High-tower Creek, the youngest of five children. His family lived so far back in the woods and so close to the land that when the Great Depression came a few years later, "they couldn't tell the difference," he would often say.

Floyd was the offspring of generations of survivors, people who overcame the challenges and the hazards of living in the Great American Wilderness: the back breaking work, disease, hunger and isolation. Those who survived this gauntlet were tough and resourceful and they passed on these qualities to their children and grandchildren.

Toughness and resourcefulness are good for survival, but a third ingredient was needed for our Appalachian communities to thrive. That ingredient was faith; faith in God, faith in community and common decency and faith in a great nation. Faith allowed Floyd to seek out the world beyond the shadows of these ancient ridge lines. Faith carried a young man from Towns county who could not swim a stroke, who passed his swim test for the Navy by bouncing across an irrigation ditch in Texas on the tip of his toes, around the world on a Benson Class Destroyer.

In 1944 Floyd's faith and his belief in the power of prayer were forged in the belly of his Destroyer during a raging typhoon with winds in excess of 90 knots. Sealed below deck during the storm, Floyd and several of his shipmates began to pray and they continued for the duration of the storm. Hit amidsthips by a gigantic wave, the USS Kalk did a 72 degree roll and survived. Several ships engulfed by the same wave did not. Floyd added many more stories of faith and the power of prayer during his long life, but as the years began to take away his ability to remember and to speak clearly, he would tell this one story as long as he was able.

"From the Mountains to the Sea" is a phrase often used to describe the diversity of Georgia's varied regions and habitats, and it is a fitting de-

scription of Floyd's path from the North Georgia Mountains, around the world and back home again. After graduating from the University of Georgia in 1946, Floyd worked on the Inter-Coastal Waterway doing pollution studies off of Georgia's coast. In the early 1950's he ran a mobile lab which tested dairies around the state in a program that became a model for the entire dairy industry. Later he worked for the State of Georgia in the Coweta and Hall county health departments in a long and distinguished career.

At the age of 57 Floyd was able to retire after 35 years of service, but he never stopped working. He devoted himself to caring for his elderly parents, Albert and Cordie Shook of Towns County, his wife, Betty, friends, neighbors and anyone in need who might cross his path. He was an accomplished beekeeper, gardener, and genealogist and, among his friends and neighbors, a legendary story-teller. Always the mountain man, Floyd could hike the steep terrain of Towns County well into his eighties and he could shoot an acorn out of the top of an oak tree with a .22 rifle.

Floyd Shooke was also my father, and he taught me the lessons that sustain me to this day. He always insisted that the key to success in life is integrity and common sense buoyed by faith, and that any hardship can be overcome through the power of prayer. He slipped away quietly on the evening of January 4th in the warm embrace of his family and the sweet sounds of the gospel bluegrass music he loved so much.

When a parent dies, we are never the same, nor should we expect to be. Something profound if unknowable shifts in our being. A son spends much of his life trying to live up to the image of his father, conscious or not of that powerful motivation, and when the father is gone, so many questions remain. In the instant a loved one is gone a cruel sleight of hand is revealed which has somehow obscured so many kindnesses and left so many gifts taken for granted. In the mad rush of living we see these things pass out of the corner of our eyes and we tell ourselves that someday... we will properly express our gratitude...that there is still time. And then there is not.

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.

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

The Divider of Time

The New Year is a gift from God. It contains 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes, and 31,536,000 seconds. Time is so very precious. However, time means many things to many people who are in different circumstances.

Henry Van Dyke illustrated this in his little poem Time Is: "Too slow for those who wait - too swift for those who fear - too long for those who grieve - too short for those who rejoice. But for those who love - time is not." We spend time as we do money. It would be interesting to take the checkbook and itemize month by month how you have spent your money. You can see very quickly where your income has been used.

Likewise, it would be interesting to look back over the past twelve months and see where we have invested our time. Has it been working? Watching television? Pursuing your favorite hobby? Worshipping? Seeking amusements? Sleeping? Being entertained? If you knew that sometime during 2014 your life on earth would end, would you alter your living from day to day? I am sure that most of us would. Life is a gift from God that should not be squandered.

An unknown war correspondent observed how people

squander their lives when he wrote: "Some men die of shrapnel - some go down in flames - but most men perish inch by inch - who play at little games."

An Arabian proverb says, "Four things come not back - A sped arrow, a spoken word, a past life, and a neglected opportunity." Time is a gift from God, but it is also opportunity. Don't squander life. Keep your focus in life. Don't get sidetracked like the bloodhound that started a hunt by chasing a stag. A fox crossed the path, so the hound chased the fox. After a while a rabbit crossed the path, so the hound chased it. Later a mouse crossed the path and the hound chased it into a hole. The hound had begun his hunt on the trail of a magnificent stag and ended by watching a mouse hole.

Sad, sad, sad that many of us start out the new year with great ambitions and end dilly-dallying by chasing fleas. Don't come to the end of life looking into an empty, dark grave without any hope.

Let me challenge you in this year of our Lord, 2014, pray a little longer, obey a little better, walk a little closer, work a little harder, sing a little louder, love a little deeper. Accept the gift of God, which is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23). Every check that you write and date this year will be a reminder that Jesus Christ invaded time, lived a perfect life, died a perfect death to give us perfect standing before God the Father. Receive His perfect gift today.

Cartoon by Powell 2014 showing penguins in a snowy landscape. Text: "Paw, come quick! This cold weather has the chickens acting funny."

Have something to sell?
Let the Herald work for you!
Contact us at 706-896-4454
Deadline for the T.C. Herald is Friday by 5 PM

Community Calendar

American Legion Post 23 meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 4 PM at VFW Post 7807, Sunnyside Rd., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-8387 for details. We need your support!
Towns County Water Board Meeting 3rd Monday of each month at 6 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 1 p.m.
Towns County Democratic Party meets the 2nd Thursday of every month at 5 PM at the Senior Center.
Towns County Republican Party meets at 6:30 PM the 4th Thursday of each month at the new Senior Center. For more info call 706-994-3919.
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 Hiwassee River Valley Kennel Club meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st Monday of each month at Brother's Restaurant in Murphy. Call Kit: 706-492-5253 or Peggy: 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.
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 5:30 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 1182, Hiawassee, GA. We do oral family histories

of residents. 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org.
Bridge Players intermediate level meets at 12:30 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at The Towns County Rec Center.
Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m., meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Call us by 706-896-0932 or mtregarts-craftsguild.org.
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 at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains.
Alcoholics Anonymous: 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.
Mothers of Preschoolers meets the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church at 706-745-2469.
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 3 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Jerry (828) 837-7658.
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. For more info 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.
Georgia Mountain Writers Club meets at St. Francis of Assisi Church the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 AM.
GMREC Garden Tours every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Shooting Creek Basket Weavers meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For more info www.shootingcreek-basketweavers.com.
Friendship Community Club meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7 PM at Clubhouse, 1625 Hwy. 76, 706-896-3637.
Goldwing Road Riders meets the 3rd Saturday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse in Hiawassee. We eat at 11 and meeting begins at 12.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meets every Wednesday evenings at 7 PM at the Red Cross building (up the hill from the chamber office on Jack Dayton Circle).
Caregiver support group meets 2nd Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m. at Brasstown Manor, located at 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-4285 for more info.
Enchanted Valley Square Dance Club. Dances 2nd & 4th Fridays at Hiawassee Senior Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch. Call 706-379-2191.
Brasstown Woodturners Guild meets 1st Saturday of month at 9:30 AM in HHS shop. For more info call J. C. at 706-896-5711.
VFW Post #7807 will be hosting a fish fry they 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month April - October. \$9. all you can eat from 4:30 - 7 PM.
Mountain Amateur Radio Club (MARC) meets 6:30 PM the 1st Monday of month at 1298 Jack Dayton Cir. (next to EMS), Hiawassee. For info call Al 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.