

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

To the Editor:

Your recent comments about the Transportation Funding Act of 2015 are surprising and leaving a lot to be desired. I don't see anything to be gained in the mountain area by dividing the state into metro and rural areas.

We in the mountains gain a lot of economic benefits from a growing metro area. Except for the metro area, we would not need a Brasstown Resort, Fieldstone Inn, Vogel State Park and Unicoi State Park. Hundreds of jobs are created as a result of the desire for second homes in the mountains. Let's move on to thinking about a state in its totality and not certain regions.

Representative Stephen Allison's vote again reflects why we need term limits on state and federal officials.

Sincerely,
Bob Cloer



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Q: Dr. Don, my husband and I have an eight year old boy who is quite frail. When he was five he had heart surgery and it seems like he has not been the same since. The problem is he has become a very picky eater. He tells me what he wants and I fix it for him, but then he hardly eats any at all - just a few bites. An hour later he's hungry again and I fix what he wants, and the cycle starts all over. Do you think this is serious?

A: Well, I think it's serious to his mom. Don't misunderstand, heart surgery is a major life event, at five - or any age. Because parents understand the significance of the procedure it is not uncommon for them to be more emotionally stressed than the youngster. It is also common for the child to quickly figure out that being sick makes him/her the center of attention, and attention is addictive. Many a parent has unwittingly contributed to their child becoming virtually handicapped by allowing them to play the "I need special consideration" card. So here is what I recommend...

Schedule an appointment with his pediatrician to make sure there is no physical problem with the boy's digestive

system and no food allergies. When that checks out OK then the "special consideration" issue just went away. So, establish a regular meal schedule, like maybe 7, noon, and 6, perhaps with a small mid-afternoon snack when he comes home from school. Mom decides the menu, not an eight-year old. His food is the same as everyone else's. Put one small spoonful on his plate of what the others are eating. Without any drama tell him he must eat that before he can leave the table. When he has cleaned up his plate (however long it takes) he can have as much as he wants for seconds. Make it clear there will be nothing else to eat until the next scheduled meal. Be matter-of-fact here; no trumpet fanfare. This is just how mealtime works at our house.

Don't congratulate him when his food is eaten, that's how it's supposed to be. He is a normal part of the family and will no longer be awarded special consideration because he had surgery three years ago. You want him to see himself as normal and not a victim. He may not like losing his celebrity status; be strong.

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

Reece Center opens Thursday

It's that time of year again, time to head up to Choestoe and visit the Byron Herbert Reece Farm and Heritage Center.

On Thursday, April 2, the Farm and Heritage Center will open to the public for its fourth season. If you haven't been there, it's a site to see. Complete with farm exhibits, the Center also teaches young people about Reece's famous writings.

Did you know Reece was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize? If you're not a follower of the man and his writings, more than likely you didn't know that.

A major beginning, Reece brought notoriety to the North Georgia Mountains as his prose began to make it through the professional literary circles.

The biggest question surrounding Reece was how could a sodbuster from Appalachia write such serious volumes of work?

Well, he was self-taught, and was reading some mighty big books at an early age, including the Bible.

Reece is Georgia's Appalachian Poet/Novelist, as declared by the Georgia General Assembly.

Situated on 9.3 acres remaining of the Reece family property, the Farm and Heritage Center seeks to introduce visitors to both the literary and cultural legacy of this Farmer Poet. The venue's exhibits display numerous farm implements and tools typical of those used by the Reece family during the first half of the 20th century, as well as graphics, pictures, and other items that describe Reece as an acclaimed literary figure.

Weddings, family reunions, organizational meetings or picnics, and other special events can be accommodated in the spacious pavilion. Also, the Center is an excellent opportunity for a school field trip.

Details about renting the pavilion or arranging a field trip are available by calling (706) 745-2034 or by e-mail at reecesociety@gmail.com. Group visits may also be arranged through these contacts.

Located one mile north of Vogel State Park on Highway 129, the Center will be open on Thursdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., through November. There is no charge to visit the Welcome Center gift shop and museum area. A fee of \$4 for persons, 12 and older, is required to tour the exhibits on the grounds and in the barns.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Mark Twain wrote that "patriotism is supporting your country all the time, and your government when it deserves it." He was speaking to a national audience about the federal government, but we can apply his wisdom at the local level also, where "country" can be taken to mean "community."

As our community anticipates the upcoming election year, there are some other things I hope we will keep in mind as well. Elections in Towns County, while generally civil on the surface, have historically been quite mean spirited behind the scenes. In the anonymous world of online discussion topics, where cowards are able to insult with impunity, the accusations and comments can be quite vile. Whatever a person's motivation for seeking public office, I believe they have to be rather thick skinned to endure the constant flow of antipathy and gossip.

We are not by any reckoning unique in our penchant for negativity during elections. Each and every election in any place where some form of democracy has existed has, throughout history, been susceptible to the vulnerabilities of that reptile part of our brains which divides "us" from "them." In a national or statewide election the candidates can take some comfort in the anonymity of distance from the electorate. In a local election, we seem to forget that the people we revile with our comments and accusations are also our neighbors, members of our own community; people with families and with children who go to our schools. They are people we might see in church, at a ball game or in the grocery store. Our insults are much more personal in a small community.

It is "natural" to compete, to confront and to argue, but in a civil society we consciously choose to control the animal side of our nature. Many of us who pride ourselves on our Christian heritage do not hesitate to "bear false witness" and repeat rumors about people we may not even know or may never have met. Some of us, whatever our religious, cultural or political background, are just plain mean.

For any of us who may resent or resentful the above, I would offer a different paradigm for thinking about local government. Whether you agree with the politics of our current office holders or 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:

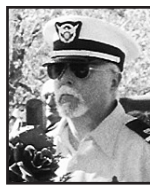
Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net. Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial 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.

you are now and have always been able to walk into the offices of any elected official here and either see that person face to face or get an appointment to do so. That kind of personal access just isn't possible in larger communities. So if you object, for example, to the way Mr. Kendall or Sheriff Clinton performs his duties, you have the opportunity to share your opinion with the one person who can do something about it.

If your opinions are irreconcilable with those of your elected officials, then you get to vote. It is as simple as that, or it should be. I am often amazed to hear from the loudest complainers that they did not vote, indeed, that they never vote. It would seem logical that the right to complain must be purchased by exercising the right to vote, but alas, this is not the case. If you do not vote, I highly recommend it. Voting is surely as convenient as stooping over a computer in the dead of night to swap venom with other virtual denizens, and it may just be an antidote for that venom.

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The Veterans' Corner

By
Scott Drummond,
USCG Veteran

Bud Johnson/US Navy/ Advocate for all Veterans

QMC C.E. "Bud" Johnson, USNR Ret., just celebrated his 93rd birthday here in Hiawassee, and we are blessed to have him drop anchor here. His Navy exploits and outstanding awards are far too many to even begin listing here, enlisting in the Navy at age 17 on 14 June 1939, right out of Gibbs HS in Canton, Ohio. He participated in a naval blockade at Martinique, French West Indies in late 1939 aboard the USS Hughes, and then went on to North Atlantic patrol and convoy duty, constantly under attack by German U-boats known as "Wolf Packs". Not allowed to fire, as America was neutral at that time, the Navy had the latest sonar gear and would track down and report positions of those German subs to the Canadian and British corvettes who would then engage the hideous German submarines.

After serving all over the Atlantic, and chasing the German battleship, the notorious Bismarck, Bud served aboard our minesweeper, YMS-21 out of Charleston, SC to Savannah, GA clearing floating mines placed by the Germans on a regular basis. Bud was already being promoted through the ranks to second class QM by this time. Bud reported aboard commissioned Fleet Tug, USS Choctaw out of Charleston, SC for towing, salvage and fire fighting duty on our US Atlantic coast, Chesapeake Bay, Bermuda, and European Africa areas of operation. In 1944 Bud proudly served in the very tough naval operations in and

around Iwo Jima. After promotion to Chief Quartermaster, Bud reported aboard our USS Missouri in December 1945. On 1 March, 1983 Bud retired from his Navy and US Navy Reserve duty with 36 years and 4 months service. He has captained sail and power yachts, and served passenger ships for Grace Lines Steamship Co., as a part of his civilian sailing career having obtained through much hard work and studies his USCG Masters License.

Bud has lived here in our mountain community for over 33 years, serving all our fellow Veterans with a kind heart, positive attitude for God, country and all our fellow citizens. So much of our Veterans' work and maintaining history has been spearheaded by Bud. Most important to Bud, is his love of Jesus, and he lives a very strong Christian life.

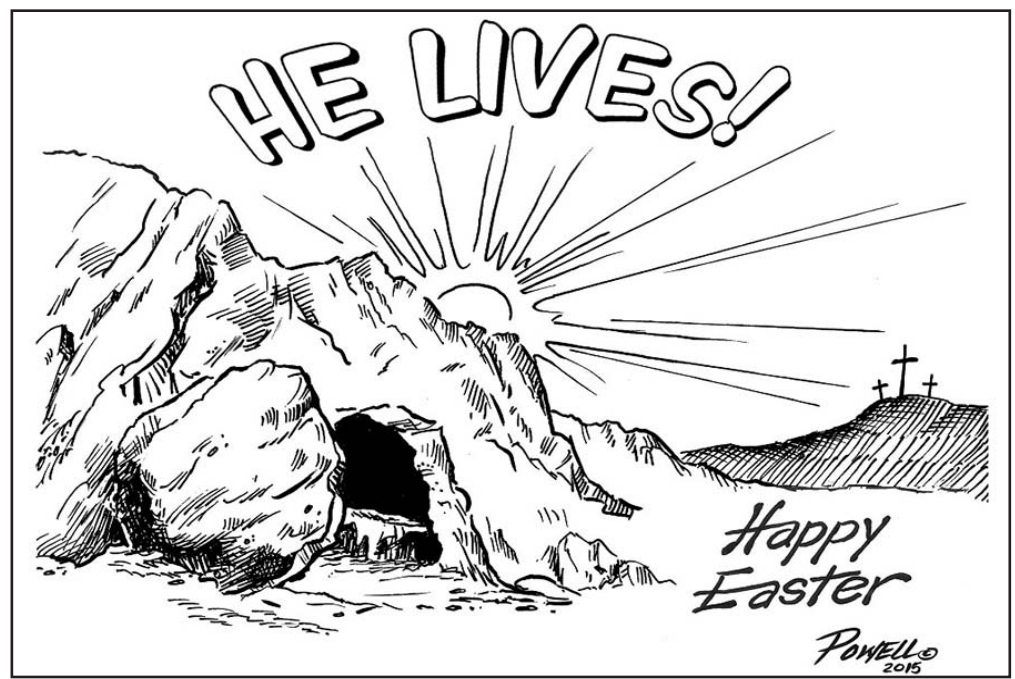
Here's what Bud had to say about all this: "What more could a seaman want than fair winds, a following sea, and a safe port at the end of his journey."

"The Supreme Commander blessed me with the ability to navigate by His celestial planets and stars, to pilot His mighty oceans deep, and to respect His furious seas."

America is graced indeed to have such men, and we here are indeed blessed to have Bud and many more Veterans who have served our nation and given the best they could give so that we could have our freedoms we are blessed with today.

Thank you, Bud and thanks to all Veterans.

Semper Paratus



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!
VFW Fish Fry April - October on 2nd & 4th Fridays each month from 4:30 - 7. \$10 per plate.
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 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.
Democratic Party of Towns County meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5 PM at the new Senior Center.

Towns County Planning Commission is held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Courthouse.
Towns County Commissioners meetings 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 Unicoy Masonic Lodge #259 meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
Stevens Lodge #414 F & AM meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in Young Harris. Sat. morning breakfast 2nd Sat. of each month from 8 - 10:30 AM. \$6 adults, \$3 12 & under.
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 old Rec Center in Hiawassee at 5:30 p.m. 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 Daniel's Steakhouse, Hiawassee. The Board meets at 4 p.m., and the Guild at 6. Call us 706-896-0932.
Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. Details can be found at www.mcug.org.
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.
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 6 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 evening at 7 PM at the Red Cross building 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 Towns Co. Rec. Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch.
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.
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.
The Board of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce meet the second Monday of every month at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office, 1411 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris.
The Quilting Bee at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church in Family Life Center, Room 216. 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10 AM - 3 PM. Bring a sack lunch. For more information call Kathy at 706-835-6721 or Marilyn at 706-897-4367.
Mountain Coin Club meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the North Georgia Tech campus in Blairsville. Guests are welcome. For more info, call 706-379-1488.

Towns County Herald

Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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