

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:
La Prade's Marina in Clarkesville was the place to be for concerned Republicans this past Saturday.
 C.H.A.R.G.E. (Citizens Helping America Restore Government Ethics) sponsored a Republican Senatorial Candidate Forum. All five (four declared and one on the fence) were invited. Only Congressman Dr. Paul Broun and Jack Kingston and former GA Secretary of State Karen Handel participated.
 After the Prayer and the Pledge, the Candidates introduced themselves. Dr. Broun first, then Jack Kingston then Ms. Handel.
 Dr. Broun stood upon his Conservative record, and spoke of his many bills introduced to reduce the size, cost and control of Government. He called for the abolishment of the EPA, the Education Department, and the IRS. He again and again espoused his "Four Criteria" - Is it (morally) right? Is it Constitutional? Is it necessary? Is it affordable?
 He weighs these four factors before casting his vote in the House, and the answer to all four must be yes.
 Mr. Kingston also spoke of his record, of successfully "actually getting Legislation passed and signed by Obama" and of his bulldog tenacity in "wearing down" opponents on the other side of the aisle. He concurred with Dr. Broun on many points, but also stressed the is in a Congressional District that is 28% black, that Obama won this District with 55% in 2012, while he, a Republican, took 52% in the multi-cultural District. He is a proponent of the Fair Tax, and stressed his Conservative values and upbringing.
 Karen Handel painted herself as "somebody new", and "a different face". This is an interesting approach, as she is a former Sec'y of State, and narrowly lost the Governor's Primary to Nathan Deal. She also served on the Board of Komen For The Cure, resigning after being accused of limiting Grant funds to Planned Parenthood, and great political pressure put on that Organization to fire her. She is no new comer to politics.

Next, questions were drawn from a basket and each Candidate responded in turn.
 Three rather good questions were pulled, although the one was obviously a set-up for Handel. The Candidates were asked how the "very entitled" (meaning the Congressmen) were supposed to reduce entitlements. Kingston skirted the issue, changing the subject, and Broun continued on that tack, talking about the current Gov't programs and plans to cut spending. Someone from the crowd yelled that they were not addressing the question, and Handel picked right up and tried to again paint herself as a new face, someone not absorbed by the Washington Machine. This compelled an obviously angry Broun to respond that he pays for his own haircut, and pays considerably more in DC than he does at home. He also buys his own Health Insurance, "available to anyone". He called the accusations of an over privileged lifestyle "outright lies".

This is what I took from the experience and seeing these three and their campaign strategies:

If you are of a "reelect nobody" mindset, than Karen Handel might be your Candidate.

If you want a Senator that strives for compromise while holding to his declared Conservative values, Jack Kinston may be for you.

If you are looking for a "stick to his guns" Candidate with Constitutional Conservative values, someone proud to be called "Dr. No" by the Democrats, then Dr. Broun could be your choice.

Then again, there are at least two more voices to be heard from, although they declined to show. But it's early, very early, and things will ebb and flow before the first primary, sometime next summer.

Mark Wolchko

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
 By Don Jacobsen

Have you heard about supper? It seems to be a carefully-guarded secret, but families who sit together regularly around the supper table - without distractions like TV and cell phones - are less apt to have troubled kids. We've known that for a long time but on-going studies keep confirming it.

McGill University, in Montreal, Canada, one of the world's leading research universities, recently conducted a monster study of more than 26,000 teenagers and affirmed the conclusion that families that generally eat together - supper seems to work best - had kids that were happier and more upbeat, more helpful to others inside their family as well as outside, and generally more satisfied with their life circumstances. Dr. Frank Elgar, a principal in the study, is a specialist in family influences on child mental health.

If you're like me, you find yourself asking, "What could possibly be the relationship between where family members eat supper and the happiness level of the kids?" But on reflection, it figures. Given today's frantic pace and fractured schedules kids are often denied the stability family is supposed to provide. Sean eats dinner in his room doing homework, Emily is on the phone


texting three friends about the day's events, and mom and dad are in the den watching television. It can seem as though the only thing they have in common is a mailing address.
 But gather the clan around the table and the family climate changes. Dad breaks the news that he is rejoicing because he finally closed the deal on the Nelson contract. Yea, dad! Mom reports on her trip to see an ailing neighbor and the groceries she dropped off there. Yea, mom! Mom asks Sean how his science project is coming along. Dad says, "Emily, what's the most exciting thing that happened in your day? How'd that spelling test go... I'll bet you aced it."

Mom and dad are not prying here; they're listening. Lots of opportunity for affirmation, to let the kids know how proud you are of them. A chance to learn what's on your kids' minds, what bothers them, what pleases them. No judgment; no criticism. Something didn't go right? A simple statement like, "Well, I'll bet you'd do that differently if you had it to do over," takes the place of a scolding. Great opportunity to convince your kids how valuable they are in your family. I mean, 26,000 teens can't be wrong, right?

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

Fire is part of your community - Are you ready?

Towns County scores another first, well at least in the Eastern US, and one of eight in the entire nation! Towns County has been selected to participate in a wildfire education program called Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) and will be one of the pilot projects for the program over the next year. We were chosen because Towns has Georgia's leading Firewise program. Towns County has 6 certified Firewise communities with 3+ more applications in progress. No other county in Georgia has more than 1. Records show that Towns' fire occurrences have declined 75% since the Firewise program was started, so it obviously works. The competition for the Fire Adapted Communities pilot program was strong and Georgia beat out Florida and Texas to have this honor. Towns also beat out Camden County to be Georgia's chosen program. Recently at a meeting in Boise, Idaho, I learned about the Fire Adapted Community concept, and I learned that the eastern version for FAC will look like whatever we make it to be over here since we will develop the eastern model. During our FAC development we will also be working with neighboring communities to start them on the path to becoming an FAC. There are 7 other communities participating in the FAC pilot development, from Minnesota, New Mexico, Colorado, California (2), Washington, and Oregon. The 8 "pilots" will develop an FAC concept within loose guidelines with the goal of reducing wildfire losses, and when all is said and done, the national plan will look like a combination of the eight pilot plans that can be tailored to a particular locality. We began the process of defining the Towns County Fire Adapted Communities program with a kickoff meeting at Brasstown Valley on June 21st with national, state, and local speakers and agencies represented as well as local citizens. The FAC concept is: * A Fire Adapted Community takes responsibility for its wildfire risk. Actions address resident safety, homes, neighborhoods, businesses and infrastructure, forests, parks, open spaces, and other community assets. The more actions a community takes, the more fire adapted it becomes. * Being a Fire Adapted Community is not an end-point, but rather a continuous process and we will continuously build and update the plan in order to keep our residents safe and protect our resources. If you think a destructive wildfire

Executive Director of RC&D

Frank Riley

can't happen here, check out the recent fires in Tennessee and South Carolina. Once we declare that Towns County is a FAC Adapted Community next June we will be able to stand on our own in the face of a major wildfire event.
 The Towns County FAC plan will show you how to be ready and to protect our county's structures and resources. The Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council will administer the FAC program's development during the next year. I will be the project manager wearing two hats: the RC&D's FAC project manager as well as the Coordinator of the Towns County Fire Safety Education Group so there should be no communication problems. The Fire Adapted Communities coalition is: US Forest Service, US Fire Administration, US Dept of Interior, International Association of Fire Chiefs, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety, National Association of State Foresters, National Fire Protection Association, The Nature Conservancy, National Volunteer Fire Council, National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and the WUI Mitigation Committee.

Frank M. Riley, Jr, CF is Executive Director - Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council. For more information on the Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council, visit our web site www.cheestchattrcd.org - Phone 706-894-1591 email susan.cccrd@gmail.com.

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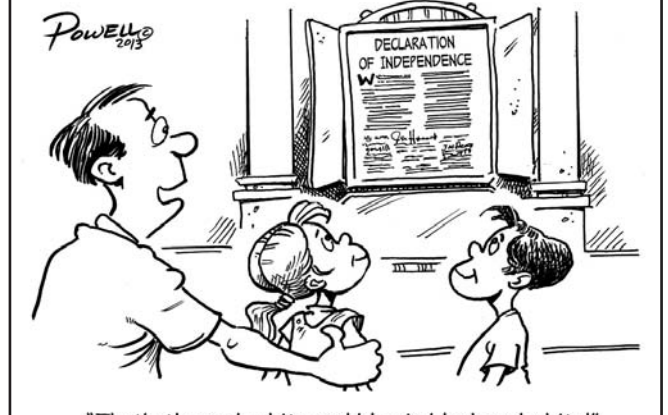
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"IT'S ON MY MIND.."
 Danny H. Parris

The joyful sound
 Many of you recall the by-gone days of bells. Traditionally, we have been a nation that celebrated our freedom with the ringing of bells. We were called to worship by the ringing of church bells. The little church where I attended as a young boy had a rope hanging down in the foyer. That rope was attached to the bell that was housed in the belfry on the roof. Mr. Albert Pruitt seemed to be in charge of ringing the bell. Mr. Pruitt was a fine Christian gentleman. The rope did not hang low enough for boys with short arms to reach, but Mr. Pruitt would lift little boys up in his arms and let them pull the rope to ring the bell. What a thrill!! Of course, if you got to ring the bell you had to get to church long before service was to begin. The church bell has always reminded me of my freedom to worship. That sound has always been precious falling on my ears. When I started first grade at McCaysville Elementary School, bells seemed to be essential to keep order and keep everyone on schedule. The teacher had a small round bell on her desk that she would just tap to restore order to the class. The large board (shaped to fit a rowdy boy's bottom) next to the bell gave additional power to the bell. When recess was over, a teacher, or a student, selected by the teacher, would walk to the middle of the playground and ring a bell that had a long wooden handle to signal playtime had ended. The school bells always reminded me that I had the freedom to pursue knowledge and learning. I haven't forgotten that sound. At Christmas time bells have always been prominent. We sing songs of Christmas bells such as "Jingle Bells" and "Silver Bells". We play hand bells and listen to the Salvation Army bells calling us to remember that we still have the poor

among us. The bells of Christmas remind me that I am free from darkness and bondage because the light of God in Christ Jesus has set me free. I refuse to forget those sounds of freedom at Christmas. At funerals we sing songs like "When They Ring Those Golden Bells". At death we are reminded that we have won the ultimate victory. Thank God, we are free at last. Thank God for the sound of those Golden Bells. To every true American the most famous and revered bell is the Liberty Bell, which can be seen in Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It may surprise you, however, to learn that comparatively it is not a large bell. Moscow has the bragging rights for the largest bell in the world. It weighs 180 tons, but it has never been hung or rung since it cracked in the furnace. Moscow's second bell weighs 128 tons and is the largest in use in the world. The largest bell in the United States weighs eighteen and one fourth tons. It is in the Riverside Church in New York City. The Liberty Bell weighs but 2,080 pounds. It was cast in England in 1752. It broke in ringing on its arrival in Philadelphia in 1753. It was recast using the same material and inscription: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Leviticus 25:10). As we are now engaged in resisting the enemies of freedom, both at home and abroad, may I remind all of us to never forget those joyful sounds of freedom. The Psalmist said, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, o Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name they shall rejoice all the day: and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For Thou art the glory of their strength: and in Thy favor our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our defense; and the Holy One of Israel is our King" (Psalm 89:15-18).

Pause on this 4th and thank God for the joyful sounds of freedom and pray God's blessings on those men and women who are at this very moment standing in the gap to maintain our liberty.



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 2 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 Uncies 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.ngatuf692.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.
Prostate Cancer Support Group meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 5-6 PM in the Cancer Treatment Center Auditorium in Blairsville. For more info call Steve 706-896-1064.
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 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 evenings at 7 p.m. 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 their 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.

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