

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

Teach children to never run across the road to catch a school bus.

As school is starting back, your Sheriff's Office is also beginning our fourth session of the Citizens' Law Enforcement Academy. We are very excited to offer these courses for our citizens. While they began as a service to our citizens who wanted to learn more about their office of sheriff, these courses have proven to be even more beneficial to our office and the citizens of Towns County.

At the end of our first CLEA class, the students wanted to stay involved in their sheriff's office and formed a CLEA Alumni as a volunteer organization. Each class since has been offered the same opportunity and we now have more volunteers than paid employees. The Towns County Sheriff's Office has 40 employees, while the CLEA Alumni has approximately 60 active volunteers.

These volunteers have proven to be an invaluable resource to our office and our community. They have offered an extended level of expertise and saved tremendous amounts of money to the tax payers with their volunteer efforts. Just over the nine days of the Georgia Mountain Fair, CLEA volunteers have donated approximately 207 hours in support of the Sheriff's Office. To put that into perspective, if we had paid deputies overtime for those hours it would have cost nearly \$4,200. Not only did our volunteers save tax payers, they offered assistance to patrons including, but not limited to: recognizing a medical event and rendering aid until EMS could arrive, assisting an elderly woman to her vehicle in the rain, and assisting patrons in countless other ways. Thank you again to our volunteers! If you, or someone you know would like to participate in a future CLEA course, please contact your sheriff's office at 706-896-4444.

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The Middle Path

by Don Perry

My father had talent for using simple hand tools to make profound changes to a landscape. With a shovel and a hoe, for example, he could coax water into going where he wanted it to go. He would work the dirt roads running over our grandparents' farm by hand, investing only a few hours from time to time, but his humble efforts would determine the difference between a road maintained and a road washed out in a downpour. He would do the same in the garden, trenching a low area to keep it from becoming saturated, and in the creeks, moving a rock or two here; widening a channel there, to keep water from undercutting the bank and stealing topsoil to carry downstream.

Dad had an eye for making the small, subtle changes to a landscape that would be magnified many-fold by the effects of Nature over time, and he tried to teach me to cultivate my life in the same way that we worked the land. A lot of wisdom never takes root in the rocky ground of youth, perhaps because youthful hormones seem to have a detrimental effect on the hearing. Luckily, that jewel of wisdom somehow made it past my eardrums and lodged in the brain, though it took many years for me to understand its value.

The value of small, incremental changes cannot be overestimated. That value is perfectly illustrated in the results of compound interest in a disciplined investment plan, or in turning a healthy activity into a life affirming habit.

You can see the power of small, incremental changes to produce undesirable results as well: A loose rock in the road becomes a gully. A dripping pipe becomes a new floor. A second helping of potatoes becomes a second chin.

Lately I have been giving much thought to Dad's cultivation techniques in weeding out undesirable influences in my own life. If I turn off the television and look dispassionately at the data, I can clearly see that we live in a time of extraordinary abundance, of comparative peace and indeed, in the United States, of safety from violent crime.

And yet I, like so many of my fellow citizens, too often find myself worrying about things that have not yet happened. Granted, our brains are wired to accentuate the negative, but modern life seems constantly bombarded by a background radiation of negativity.

Headlines have broadcast doom and depravity for as long as there has been media, but it seems to me that the drama intensified at the turn of the millennium, and after the attacks on the World Trade Center in

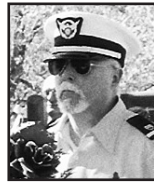
2001, drama became the norm. We have short attention spans, but most of us were alive to remember the years we worried about "Y2K." When the world did not end at midnight on 1 January, 2000, Chicken Little simply turned his attention to 2012. The false prophets and their "prophesies" set their targets on an obscure Mayan calendar and the peddlers of doom enjoyed another decade of record profits.

We survived 2012, and today we find ourselves without a dominant theme for the next apocalypse, so we have to rely on a host of substitutes. The climate is out to get us, or an undiscovered asteroid, or the next pandemic, or an invasion of aliens from either outer space or across our borders. The terrorists, the Chinese, the Russians, the democrats or the republicans will destroy us all, and there will be film at 11.

I cannot think of a single benefit that I have ever received from the countless hours of daily media panics and nightly reports of crime and misfortune, but one thing is certain: I will never get those hours back. Lately the dripping pipe of doom and depravity urges me to examine my own foundation. How have the regular, incremental doses of negativity eroded my own happiness and contentment? How skewed is my image of the world and of my fellow humans? When I am suspicious or mistrusting, is it a result of my own observation and reason, or is it a view through a murky filter, clouded by many years of unguarded, unthinking exposure to information selected, not for any redeeming value, but for its ability to capture my attention.

With a bow to my ancestors, I recommit to the mindful cultivation my own life. In practice, it means chopping the weeds of corporate media with same careful strokes that I would cut down a ragweed in a row of corn. It means avoiding as much as possible people who are addicted to drama, who create drama where none exists in order to satisfy their cravings. It means retraining my thought patterns to allow the positive to have full and equal access to my consciousness until it becomes a habit.

I'm sure you already see the difficulty inherent in this plan. How do we prosper and how do we stay safe in an increasingly complex world that requires us to be informed to be successful? The answer is at least as old as the Bible, which urges us to be "in" the world but not "of" it. No one said it would be easy!



The Veterans' Corner

By Scott Drummond, USCG Veteran

I'd rather be in Atlanta, poet in Pacific writes:

Receiving kudos from a wise gentleman, a USMC Korean War Vet, a very kind and decent man, from an old home grown mountain family of patriots, on last week's letter from our scrapbook, I thought it worthwhile to share another old "poem" written in an entirely different context by a young soldier. As happens in confusion, danger and chaos of combat, which most of us simply cannot fathom, language, thoughts and feelings must be employed to steel oneself in an effort to survive and to accomplish what must be done. Political correctness and sensitivity fails under these conditions as is reflected in this poem.

Just about all combat vets I know are kind, meek, and big hearted souls, but yet have experienced what many today would consider racist and harsh language similar to this historically accurate poem written by someone who helped to save our nation, and our civilization from tyranny. Today the Japanese people are by and large our allies, thanks to those who pushed themselves to their limits, as well as those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Not only those who were in WWII or those who suffered the pain, fear and uncertainty of combat, but all our young men and women who understand, to this day, that our America is something far greater than themselves, they still serve.

Once again from the old scrapbook, something

very real to those we owe a very humble "Thank you!"

Sergeant Lewis Allen, a commercial artist before he entered the service, and now assigned to New Guinea, has written his sentiments toward the South Pacific in a seven-stanza poem to his mother, Mrs. J.D. Allen, 1390 Piedmont Avenue. The poem follows:

The Road is Rough We Travel

We're over here,
With a job to do,
A long, long way to roam.
But there's never a day,
That passes our way,
That we do not think of home.
The days are hot,
The nights are long.
The road is rough we travel,
And still it may be quite a while
Before these things unravel.
The yellow Japs are on the run
With all their dirty leaders;
We'll run them in the open sea
So they'll not be repeaters.
They hide in caves,
They hide in holes.
Just like the jungle rat.
But we'll break their dirty necks
Before we lift our hat.
We wonder how it's going to be
When we come marching home;
Jobs for us,
We hope and trust,
No need again to roam.
We'll be content,
Our duty spent,
To have a little fun.
Our cheer out here,
Is small I fear.
We'll take it on the run.
Mail is our big delight,
It helps to keep us snappy
And when we get mail from you
It makes us very happy.
New Guinea is
A grand ole place,
A dumbbell he will banter,
But as for me, I'd rather be,
Down South in old Atlanta.
Semper Paratus

Back to school and CLEA

Seems hard to believe, but school will be back in session beginning Thursday, August 6. Please be aware that in the mornings from approximately 7:30 AM until approximately 8 AM there will be increased traffic in front of the school. Traffic will again increase around 3 PM. The Sheriff's Office will be providing traffic control to assist with safety. Please help us keep our children safe by being aware and paying extra attention to safety while driving.

Please pay extra attention throughout the county for school busses. It is a serious offense to pass a school bus that is stopped to pick up, or drop off students and more importantly it is extremely dangerous. Young children are often excited and very unaware of the dangers involved. Please help us look out for them by paying close attention while driving.

The following information is provided by Safe Kids USA, and is offered as tips for parents to help keep our children safe.

It is difficult for children to understand that there is a 10' blind spot around a school bus in which the driver cannot see the child.

Help keep children safe by teaching them to wait until the bus comes to a complete stop, the door opens, and the bus driver says that it is safe to board the bus.

Make sure children know that they should never walk behind or close to the sides of a bus.



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Q: I have a 3-year old who won't keep her clothes on. At night I don't care because she's in bed anyway, but in the daytime it's really frustrating. I dress her and I'm hardly out of sight before she's got her clothes off waltzing around the house like a naked ballerina. So far we haven't had an issue with friends or neighbors coming over, but that day is coming I'm sure. Besides, I'm sure she'll catch cold. Is this normal for a 3-year old?

A: What's normal for a 3-year old? If she was 16 I'd say we have a problem here, but not with a 3-year old. And don't worry about her catching cold. This is a behavior issue, not a health issue. Catching cold when you get cold is primarily a carry-over from a previous generation of nervous moms and has no bearing in fact.

An important part of your question is when you describe her behavior as "really frustrating." I suspect she has figured that out and she knows that when she comes pirouetting down the hall in the buff that you will launch into your frustration thing. She loves that. It works. It works every time. Why would she stop?

One of the results little kids (and sometimes older ones) get out of their aberrant behavior is the shock value. One of the things we try to help parents develop is a non-shockable exterior. You may be shocked, but it's going to help you get through this if you don't act shocked. Be calm. Take it in stride. Don't give off the message that he or she has rung your bell. You are the authority; you are the leader. So, lead already.

For instance, you may inform nature girl that it is fine if she takes her clothes off, but it can only be in her room. Anytime she wishes to play in her room she can wear any outfit she wishes, or none. But any time she comes out into the rest of the house, just like the rest of the family, she must be clad. If she challenges your new rule and comes out of her room, matter-of-factly take her by the hand, remind her of the rule, and return her there.

Don't be distressed if you need to do this more than once. Or more than fifty times. Be strong, mom. You can do this. Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net.

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.**

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 U.S. Congressman Doug Collins, 9th District, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-9893
 Rep. Stephen Allison, Georgia House of Representatives, 404-656-0177 or 0185
 Sen. John Wilkinson, Georgia State Senate, 404-463-5257
 Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall, 706-896-2276
 Clerk of Superior Court Cecil Dye, 706-896-2130
 Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers, 706-896-2267
 Magistrate/Probate Judge David Rogers, 706-896-3467
 Sheriff Chris Clinton, 706-896-4444
 Coroner Tashina Eller, 706-489-9519
 Enotah Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley, 706-896-6489
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