

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

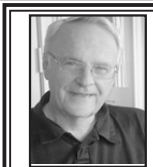
Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:
We are of the "our pets are part of the family" group in our county, so, when two of our dogs were stolen and dropped off somewhere, we were totally distraught. Thanks to a very kind family and an ad in a newspaper there was a happy ending. Our dogs are fenced in and come inside when we are gone and also at night. Over the time we have lived here, there have been occasions that a dog has dug under the fence and has gone exploring. All our dogs are spayed and neutered, so it has been our experience that they stay in our woods on our property and have never been gone for more than an hour when we see them wagging their tails at the gate or happily running up to us as we search for them. Now that the dogs are all getting older, this rarely ever happens. However, on the 16th of August two of our old female dogs disappeared. It had been less than an hour that they had crawled under the fence. Both had been rescue dogs and both had been with us for ten years. The hound dog was about 13 and rather feeble. We searched everywhere on our property and throughout the neighborhood - not a sign. We learned others in the neighborhood knew of dogs being picked up. One neighbor's small lost dog was eventually located in Brasstown.

Thank goodness for Castoff Critters who sent out emails to every possible place (vets, other shelters, animal control in counties that have it). We advertised in 4 newspapers and got help from WKRK Radio. We realize it isn't possible to have an animal control officer like Union - an officer who has gotten universal praise. Towns is smaller and does not have the resources. We appreciate that Commissioner Kendall has to make very hard choices with his limited resources - and we admire him very much for all he has accomplished for Towns. We know we have a very up-standing sheriff in Sheriff Clinton and his dedicated officers and that they must prioritize what they do. However, we have a suggestion that wouldn't cost anything in time or money. My husband called the sheriff's office to report that our dogs were stolen and asked if they had reports of any problems. The office had not heard of any. We feel simply taking a report when it is turned in, making a list - after asking one question: Has the animal been spayed or neutered? - would at least be a data bank to see if there are patterns. We would not expect an officer to spend time looking into this unless there were pockets of concerns. I worked for a time in juvenile probation. Every one of my violent criminals started out doing smaller things - like vandalism or shoplifting. And harming innocent animals was a definite red flag.

Hopefully, someday, we may have enough resources to have a person like Union's animal control officer, but maybe this one little step could help in a small way.

Sincerely,
Diana and Joel Smith



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Recently one of the major TV cable companies in our nation temporarily lost their signal, and across the US there was panic. All around the country folks called 911 to report the outage. 911! Like this was an emergency? Life and death? The county hospital's on fire? A rhinoceros has escaped from the city zoo? As my favorite philosopher, Charlie Brown, says, Oh, good grief.

It forced me to think about how all-pervasive TV has become. So much that when it goes away - even for a short while - a lot of folks see the event as apocalyptic. I mean, what if we don't find out who is dancing with the stars? What if Tiger misses his eight foot putt on the thirteenth hole? What if Alice leaves Fred and marries Gary? Are these the kinds of issues that fixate us? Is life really so empty and causes so scarce that it takes this kind of inane drivel to satisfy our evenings?

Think of it - hostage to a box. Your cable channel loses its signal and your whole life turns from color to black and white? The evening is in shambles? Ah, but perhaps the snowy screen in the corner makes room for conversation. Amazing. What

if you discover you like it and your family begins to talk to each other again?

Here's my beef: TV does not create greatness. In the time most Americans invest watching television in a year they could earn an advanced degree. They could read a score of books. Or write one. They could create family memories that might last into the next generation. They could learn a new language. Get a sagging body in shape. Volunteer at a local hospital. Think of the shut-ins in your community that might be blessed with a visit. Learn to play the piano - or to play the banjo thereby convincing neighbors for miles around to move. I mean, the list is virtually endless.

This is a column for parents so let me allow some kids into our circle at this point. What are they learning from the way we spend so much of our spare time? Clear the dinner table and head for the couch in the den. And weekends? Oh, weekends. How did you feel Monday morning about what your kids learned from what you did Saturday and Sunday? Remember, TV does not create greatness.

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

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Most of us have a friend or relative with a health insurance horror story and many of us have run that gauntlet ourselves. This is a cautionary tale for anyone trying to navigate the murky waters of the pre-post-semi Obamacare zone where no one from healthcare providers to insurance agents all the way to the halls of Congress knows exactly how things will ultimately play out. All we know for sure is that insurance companies will continue to get richer and many of us will get poorer in the process.

A friend of mine decided to visit a chiropractor. Her new mattress was too soft and she was having some back pain so she decided to go in for an adjustment.

As a first time customer of the chiropractic clinic, my friend was x-rayed and given some tests. She didn't even receive an adjustment on the first visit. On the second visit she finally got her adjustment - and was then presented with a treatment plan worthy of the Normandy Invasion.

Her treatment plan reminded me of the first time I tried to buy a new car and went to one of those loud talking dealerships near Atlanta that advertise heavily on local television stations. I'll never forget the "undercoating" they wanted to add to my ticket, and to my loan. Two cans of spray undercoating would have cost me about \$40 bucks at an auto parts store, but folded into the loan would have cost me three times that much.

The clinic proposed to do a series of daily treatments, at least 3 per week, for at least two months or until there was significant improvement, followed by weekly "maintenance" visits. Her "diagnosis" mentioned some sign of the beginnings of bone spurs, compressed disks and several other calamitous possibilities calling for immediate treatment.

On the first day of my friends chiropractic adventure she presented her insurance card and asked for a bill. She was told that they did not know the exact amount of the bill; better to wait until they had heard back from the insurance company. This was a mistake, but it was not her first one. The first mistake was failing to carefully read the insurance policy, or she would never have presented that card.

Here's what followed. First of all, the insurance

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 E-MAILED OR MAILED

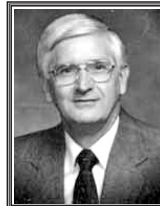
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Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

company refused to pay for any of the treatments. The reason given was that, in so many words, they did not consider chiropractors to be medical doctors. Nevertheless, even though they did not recognize chiropractic as being legitimate medicine, they took the chiropractor's "diagnosis" at face value. All this information was entered into the All-Seeing-Eye of networked computers that collect data on Americans to a degree of which the NSA itself would be proud.

My friend discontinued her chiropractic treatments, bought an inversion table and her back felt great. A few weeks after the chiropractic incident, she contacted her insurance company to update her policy. She wanted to decrease her deductible - in other words, pay them higher premiums. Her insurance company responded with a much higher premium - and a rider that denied any coverage whatsoever for her entire spine. In order to have the rider removed, she had to visit an osteopath for an updated diagnosis - at an additional cost. The insurance company did not pay for this either, since in the process of updating her policy they reset the amount she had paid into yearly deductible to \$0.

Like a cat watching a hole for a mouse to emerge, my friend's insurance company used her request to update her policy as a "break" in coverage which allowed their predatory practice of denying coverage for a "pre-existing condition" and increasing her premium, and by the same swipe of the claws eliminating entirely almost 7 months of credit toward her deductible.

I'm sure you have heard similar stories or worse. It is little wonder that the practices of one of the most vilified businesses in America finally pushed Americans into demanding change. Unfortunately this demand landed on the doorstep of a do-nothing Congress which voted a bill that nobody read into law; a bill written by the same industry it was supposed to correct, a bill full of treatment plans and undercoating that will be paid for by, you guessed it, the rapidly diminishing number of Americans who can afford to pay for anything at all.



"IT'S ON MY MIND.."

Danny H. Parris

An honest day's work

All professions have their own unique shortcomings as one father discovered. A man had ten sons. The first son became a doctor; the second son stayed out all night too. The third son became a lawyer; the fourth son wouldn't tell the truth either. The fifth son became a teacher; the sixth son didn't know anything either. The seventh son became a farmer; the eighth son couldn't make a living, so the government took care of him too. The ninth son became a preacher, and the tenth son wouldn't work either. Many people believe preachers work only on Sundays - and most believe that they work too long then. Work is vitally important, not to just make a living, but it is vital to the total well being of our lives. Jesus was the Son of God, but He worked in a carpenter shop. Jesus said, "My father still works, so I must work too: (John 5:17). Next Monday is Labor Day. It is a holiday honoring working people. In 1882, the Knights of Labor, an early labor organization began the idea of a holiday. In 1894 the American Federation of Labor designated the first Monday in September as Labor Day. President Grover Cleveland signed (1894) a bill into law making Labor Day a national holiday. Are you concerned that the dignity of labor is threatened by laziness and mediocrity? Have we lost the sense of pride to perform and produce quality? Work is a four letter word that seems to frighten people. Although one fellow said, "I like work; it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours." Work is an extension of one's own

life. It identifies who you are and what kind of person you are. It reveals something about the inspiration of your soul and something about the perspiration of your life. In this day of gambling casinos, state lotteries, sweepstakes, and "get-rich-quick" schemes many people have aspirations, but lack inspiration; they have hallucinations, but exert no perspiration. Read II Thessalonians 3:6-12. To sum up the passage Paul said, "He who works eats, he who don't won't." In conclusion, perhaps it would be good to recall Lincoln's Ten Guidelines:

"You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.

You cannot help small men by tearing down big men.

You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.

You cannot lift the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer.

You cannot help the poor man by destroying the rich.

You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than your income.

You cannot further brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred.

You cannot establish security on borrowed money.

You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence.

You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves."

My dad was one of the hardest working men that I have ever known. He taught me to give an honest day's work no matter what I did. He taught me not to be afraid of doing too much but be afraid of doing too little. Work is not a curse but a blessing from God. We work for God and with God.
Six days shall you labor!

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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
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