

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

To the Editor:

We would like to give a huge heartfelt thank you once again for the community support for The 3rd Annual Jessi's Gift 5K Run. We are so grateful to our sponsors Jacky Jones Automotive Group, Nantahala Bank & Trust Company, Brasstown Valley Resort, Body Sense, Golfopia, The Ridges Resort, Mountain Graphics, Rustic Rose, Absolute Dental Lab, United Community Bank, Brothers Restuarant, Scrubs & More and Ingles Hayesville. Thank you to Coach Stowers at Towns County High School for allowing us use of the timer.

We had over 75 runners and walkers turn out in support of Jessi's Gift Run. Thank you to all that showed up and took part in this event and to help continue Jessi's wish of helping other children. We appreciate each and everyone that Ran, Walked and volunteered to make this run successful again for the 3rd year in a row.

*Kathi & Bud Patrick
Merri Murphy
Jodi & Kevin Ford for Kingdom Kids*

Dear Editor:

The front page of today's edition of The Towns County Herald contained an article entitled, "BRMEMC set to raise power rates in October." It was an announcement by Mr. Matthew Skins, the General Manager of BRMEMC.

Reading the article, I must address a comment made by Mr. Akins. Attempting to explain that the significant increase in power rates is not to pay for the new, extreme headquarters for the EMC, Mr. Akins stated, "the truth of the matter is that neither TVA nor BRMEMC would have needed this [rate] increase if sales had remained strong."

While I would not dispute the validity of his comments, to a point. That point is asking why "sales" did not remain strong. I would say two matters impacted usage. First, tourism is down and many "summer people" did not spend as long as usual in their vacation homes in the area. The second is people are attempting to conserve both money and energy. This is due in large part to the number of people in Towns County and the surrounding area that are unemployed. It is also due to many people moving out of BRMEMC's service area.

BRMEMC and the TVA should reward people who have lowered their usage as they are complying with the "conservation" concept. We are told day in and day out by the energy companies to conserve. However, when we do conserve and usage decreases, the companies, BRMEMC and the TVA included, raise rates to offset the income they lost due to our conservation efforts. This is another example of big business "talking out of both sides of its mouth." Conserve but when you do we will increase your rates.

I will admit it is not only BRMEMC and the TVA that continue to increase utility rates. All energy costs continue to increase while people, especially those of us on fixed incomes, do not see offsetting increases in benefits or a willingness by the utility companies to provide lower rates for people who are disabled and/or receiving Social Security. They need help but it is not offered by utility companies.

In closing, I would say Mr. Akins needs to find a better "reason" for rate increases in the future because intelligent people are able to "see through" the comments he recently made.

Thank you.

*Sincerely,
Christopher D. Mazur*

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Far back in the hills of Towns County, miles away from any road, there is a little graveyard forgotten by time. Many of the gravestones are so weathered that the names are unreadable. Some of the graves are marked only by a simple rock. Nothing remains to indicate the lives lived by the bones now resting in the earth, their hopes and dreams, their joys and sorrows. Nothing remains of the homes they built, the fields they tended; nothing at all survives of their labors on this earth. Such is the fate of most of humanity. For most of us, if anything survives to mark our passage through this life, it is the stories told about us, the memories carried forward by the people who knew us.

My dad was a talker, a teller of stories. He got in line twice when the gift of gab was handed out. He talked during meals. He talked in the car. He talked while we were trying to watch our favorite shows on television. The only time he didn't talk was when we were hunting or fishing, but soon during those occasions he would begin to share the adventure in words. Once, on a family trip, he talked across the entire state of Ohio. I remember because I was doing the driving. We used to say jokingly that he was a circular breather, like a musician able to produce a continuous tone without interruption.

You can probably imagine the times when, as a teenager and a young man full of my own importance, I would roll my eyes or groan in frustration when he would begin to tell a story we had already heard, some, many times before. You can imagine the times I wished that he would just be quiet for a while.

Be careful what you wish for. One day my dad lost his ability to tell stories. Today, he struggles to put three words together. He is quiet most of the time. I would give anything to hear him talk again like he once did.

It is unfortunate that

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.*

the price young men pay for any hope of future wisdom and understanding is the arrogance and impatience of youth. I did not understand what my father was trying to give us during all those years of storytelling until it was almost too late. He was giving us the history of our family in an oral tradition that is as old as humanity. The stories he repeated over and over again are now and forever a part of me, and I can pass them on in my own time. Long after he is gone and long after I am gone, long after whatever we may have built in this life has crumbled into dust; it is the stories that may, after all, survive.

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

Making an impression

Some time ago while reading our devotions the wife and I enjoyed a devotional thought by Michael Guido. He tells the story of a crowded bus on a hot summer day. The occupants were tired and on edge. One passenger in particular became very obnoxious. She embarrassed the other passengers by using profanity. As she exited the bus she was still cursing and the driver said to her, "Ma'am you left something." "What?" She asked. "A BAD IMPRESSION," he said.

One thing is certain, wherever we go, whatever we do and the people we make contact with, we always leave something—a good impression or a bad impression. The same day we read this devotion we planned to make a beeline to several places of business. There were some things we needed so we planned to make a day of shopping. The first stop was very pleasant. The employees were friendly and helpful. In fact, we spent a lot of time in this business. When we left we felt really good and happy. Next, we went to a very large place of business where I wanted to make a sizable purchase. I checked the options on display and after a good while I selected what I wanted. In all of this time no one ever offered to assist us. Finally, in desperation I searched until I located an employee. Although, the employee came at my request he didn't seem none too happy about it. He did find out that the item I wanted was not in stock and the display item was missing some parts. I left this store disappointed, not altogether because they didn't have what I wanted but because the

employee seemed unhappy because he had to wait on me.

My point is not to make a mountain out of a molehill but a little friendliness makes everything more pleasant. The next stop was to purchase two items. The young lady was very helpful, friendly and knowledgeable. She was patient and deliberate in explaining everything about the two selections we had made. However, this store did not have them in stock. But we left happy because of the friendly service we had received. Later in the day, we went to another large store to purchase what we weren't able to get at the first store. I checked the display which contained several different models of the item I wanted. My wife and I began searching for an employee to help us without any luck. By now the devil tempts this preacher to make a scene. My thoughts were that if I push over a big display several people might show up. Of course, my sweet wife wouldn't let me make a stink. She reminded me that I needed to make a good impression. In time I did find a gentleman to assist me, but again he hadn't attended any classes on how to make friends and influence people. The selection I made was exactly what I was looking for. But you guessed it! They didn't have it in stock. As we left, my wife said, "Some days it's just hard to spend money."

No matter if it is a church, a business, a club or whatever; people want to feel appreciated and treated with respect. I do try to make allowances when people are not friendly and tend to be a little irritable. They may be having real difficulties that I am not aware of.

People who serve the public need to understand that you don't have a second chance to make a first impression. It is not how many come into your place of business or to your church but—how many come back!



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Dr. Don: You probably never got a letter like this one and I'm embarrassed to write it, but I'm very happy that school is starting. I love my kids dearly, but it seems like every summer gets longer than the one before.

I've got two in elementary school, and by the end of the summer I'm always glad I'm not a teacher, and that I only have two and not six. This year I think was the worst so far. I hate to think what next summer might be like. By the way, please don't just tell me not to feel guilty because I can't help it. (Unsigned)

Dear Unsigned: Have you seen the YouTube video of Tracy Moutafis from Framingham, MA? She's mother of two, and as the school bus pulls away from her corner on the first day of school she's out in the street, unashamedly dancing "the happy dance." I would really like to know how many in a room full of moms (and dads) would be honest enough to raise their hands and agree with you — and Tracy — that summers can be grueling.

And I concur that it ought to raise our respect level for those who become teachers. By the way, it wouldn't surprise me if many of them secretly pray for summer vacation.

And be assured that I'm not going to simply tell you not to feel guilty; no one should tell another person how they ought to feel. But let me see if I can help.

First, an observation: Attention is addictive. Meaning, the more our youngsters learn to look to us to keep them occupied, the more they come to depend on that attention. That's why, from about the age of three we urge parents to begin to choose a few simple toys, set a kitchen timer, and beginning with 5-minutes, increase the time that the child can spend playing alone till it reaches an hour or so. By the time they begin kindergarten or even pre-K, that should be a comfortable routine, and it can happen more than once a day.

And remember, now is a learning time for your kids. School can provide some important input in their development, like structure, socialization, responsibility. Others are helping you accomplish that so rejoice that you can share the responsibility. And it's ok to celebrate if you get a little more free time now. You deserve it.

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



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 Hiawassee 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 Unity 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.
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 mtngarts-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 3rd 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 1st 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 meet 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 706-996-9614 after 6 PM.

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