

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

### Letter to the Editor:

If you expect the insurance plan we both pay for to cover prostate surgery and complications of Levitra-four-hour-complications, then I expect it to cover childbirth and its complications.

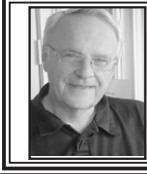
If you expect the insurance plan we both pay for to cover your child's broken leg from a skiing mishap, I expect it to cover a broken hip in my dotage.

I expect our insurance plan to cover your diabetes, irritable bowel syndrome, back pain, or arthritis; I expect it to cover your inherited diseases, brown recluse spider bites, knee or gall bladder surgery, gunshot wounds, eczema, pre-cancerous moles, tumors, or polyps, heart attacks, or motorcycle accident injuries.

I will never have an appendectomy or a tonsillectomy again, but you or a family member might have them in the future. I expect our insurance plan to cover your expenses, even though they will not be my medical needs.

The idea of medical insurance is to cover costs associated with preventive care and, if need be, medical care or catastrophic care. As everyone becomes enrolled in an insurance plan, insurance companies will compete for enrollments, and costs will come down.

Michelle Maloney



## RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

You're running behind schedule to get 9-year old Elsie to her violin lesson, but you're nearly there. Cross the tracks, turn right for a couple of blocks, and there it is. But wouldn't you know it, just as you approach the crossing the bell starts to clang, the lights begin to flash, and that long striped arm descends. If you hurry you can maybe make it, but no, it isn't worth it. So you punch the brakes. And wait.

While the slowest-moving line of freight cars in recorded history ambles past, you wait. Decision time. Fuss about the cars - or enjoy them? "Whose idea was it to run a railroad track through the middle of town, anyway?"

Or, you have a contest with Elsie to try and guess what's inside those strangely-painted train cars. You chastise yourself for not leaving home 15 seconds earlier - or, you and Elsie count the cars.

There is much at stake in your decision. Not only is it going to affect your stress level for the rest of the day, but Elsie is going to learn how adults handle unplanned disappointments. Will it ratchet up your anxiety - or provide a precious eleven and a half minutes of recess with your beautiful third grader? What a teaching moment, this.

Life is full of slow-moving trains. A downpour on the day of the much-anticipated picnic. The unexpected scary report from the doctor. That prized science project that the teacher didn't think was so great. The rejected application from the college of choice. The kids choose up sides and Elsie isn't chosen to be captain. Life is like that. And it is in these circumstances that Elsie gets the Lemons-to-Lemonade 101 class from mom and dad.

Parents get to hand off some crucial life-lessons with these kinds of events. Such as, Well, let's just have the picnic in the garage, or, I'm glad we had that doctor's exam when we did, or, Well, I'll bet you learned a lot from the science project even if you didn't get the A, or, Let's see if we can find a college closer to home that offers the same major, or, I'll bet that was a disappointment, but you got to play and your team won, so maybe that helped.

So keep a smile on your face, mom and dad; acknowledge her frustration, assure her that God is in control, and there's a brighter day ahead. That's a healthy and contagious life-focus.

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

## Smokey says, "Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires"

November 3 - 9 was Firewise/Fire Adapted Communities week in Towns County and our Firewise/FAC team had a full schedule promoting the Firewise Communities program around the County. On Wednesday the team presented a wildfire prevention & safety program to the Towns Middle School. The Towns Firewise group, Georgia Forestry Commission, Towns Fire Rescue, and the US Forest Service along with a very familiar special guest, that kids of any age know and love, Smokey Bear presented the message to the students about the dangers of fire. The guardian of our forest, dressed in a ranger's hat, belted blue jeans and carrying a shovel, he has been the recognized wildfire prevention symbol since 1944.

The Smokey story that we have heard since we were kids about how Smokey came to be is true. One spring day in 1950 in the Capitan Mountains of New Mexico, an observer in one of the fire towers spotted smoke and called the location into the nearest Ranger Station. The first crew to arrive discovered a major fire being swept along by strong winds. Word spread rapidly and more crews were called to help. Forest Rangers, Army Soldiers, New Mexico State Game and Fish Department employees and civilian volunteers worked together to control the raging fire. During one of the lulls in the fire fighting, there was a report of a lonely bear cub seen wandering near the fire line. The little cub had been caught in the path of the fire. He had taken refuge in a tree that was now nothing but a charred, smoking snag. His climb had saved his life but left him badly burned on the paws and hind legs. The firefighters removed the little bear cub from the burned tree and a rancher, who had been helping the firefighters, agreed to take the cub home. The cub needed veterinary aid and was flown to Santa Fe where the burns were treated and bandaged.

The news about the little bear spread swiftly throughout New Mexico. Soon the United Press and Associated Press picked up the story and broadcast it nationwide. Many people inquired about the little bear's progress. The State Game Warden wrote an official letter to the Chief of the Forest Service, offering to present the cub to the agency with the understanding that the small bear would be dedicated to a publicity program for fire prevention and wildlife conservation. The go-ahead was given to send the bear cub to Washington, D.C. Once there, he found a home at the National Zoo and became the living

### Executive Director of RC&D



symbol of Smokey Bear.

Smokey died in 1976 and was returned to Capitan, NM, where he is buried in the State Historical Park. In 2004 Smokey celebrated his 60th Birthday with a special logo incorporating the line "60 Years of Vigilance."

Has all this effort to prevent wildfires had an effect? During the 1930s, the average annual number of wildfires was 167,277. During the 1950s, the average yearly number of wildfires was down to 125,948. During the 1990s the number was 106,306. Now this number does include lightning started wildfires, but the trend is definitely going down. From 2001 through 2008, almost 65,000 wildfires occurred each year from human carelessness and those fires burned an average of 2,560,000 acres each year. We still have a lot of work to do. Children need to hear and learn about Smokey Bear and his wildfire prevention message, and adults need to be continually reminded of the need to prevent wildfires.

Frank Riley is Executive Director of the Chastetate/Chattahoochee RC&D Council. For more information on RC&D programs email [www.frank.ccrd@gmail.com](mailto:www.frank.ccrd@gmail.com).



### "IT'S ON MY MIND.."

Danny H. Parris

#### Disappearing Disciples

In this modern day it seems many Disciples of Christ and of the "straight and narrow" have turned from disciples to deserters. Due to the opposition of darkness against the light, and evil against what is good, and falsehood against truth, it is apparent that this relentless battle has been too much for some disciples and many have become casualties in God's army. Several years ago at the Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference, one of the speakers read an article by an anonymous writer. I believe this article speaks to our day.

"I am a soldier in the army of my God. The Lord Jesus Christ is my commanding officer. The Holy Bible is my code of conduct. Faith and prayer and the Word are my weapons of warfare. I have been taught by the Holy Spirit, trained by experience, tried by adversity, and tested by fire. I am a volunteer in this army, and I have enlisted for eternity. I will either retire at the rapture or die in this army, but I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or be pushed out. I am faithful, reliable, capable, and dependable. If my God needs me I am there. If He needs me in the Sunday School to teach the children or work with the youth, if He needs me to work with the adults He can use me because I am there."

"I am a soldier! I am not a baby. I do not need to be pampered, petted, primed up, pumped up, picked up or pepped up. I am a soldier! No one has to call me, remind me, write me, visit me, entice me or lure me. I am a soldier! I'm not a wimp. I am in place, saluting my King, obeying His orders, praising His name, and building His kingdom. No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food cards, or candy and give me handouts. I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for, or be catered to. I am committed. I cannot have my feelings hurt bad enough to turn me around, and I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside. I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit."

"When Jesus called me into this army I had nothing. If I end up with nothing I will still come out ahead. If I win my God is the reason, and He will continue to supply all of my needs. I am more than a conqueror. I will always triumph. I can do all things through Christ. The devil cannot defeat me. People cannot disillusion me. Weather cannot weary me. Sickness cannot stop me. Battles cannot beat me. Money cannot buy me. Governments cannot silence me, and hell cannot handle me. I am a soldier! Even death cannot destroy me. When my commander calls me from His battlefield He will promote me to captain and then allow me to rule with Him. I am a soldier in the army, and I am marching, claiming the victory. I will not give up. I will not turn around. I am a soldier marching heaven bound. Here I stand! Will you stand with me?"



"Just a few more government regulations and you small business folks won't have a thing to worry about!"

## Community Calendar

### 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](mailto: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.

**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 Rucy 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](http://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 [mtnregarts-craftsguild.org](http://mtnregarts-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](http://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](http://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.  
**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](http://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 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 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 706-996-9614 after 6 PM.



"Winterizing isn't so hard after your wife shows you last year's heating bills."

## Towns County Herald

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