

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



The Middle Path

by Don Perry

There is a very good chance that, if you have time to read at all this week, you will be reading in a rush. In the interest of turkeys, touchdowns and drive times, we will be brief.

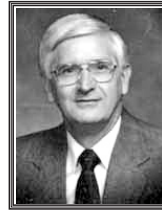
Try not to rush through this holiday. That's easy to say when the grocery shopping is all done and the guest room is cleaned out and the table is set, but slowing down to savor the moments is a worthwhile effort. All too soon we will be accelerating through daily life again, getting the kids ready for school before rushing off to work, picking them up after school to take them to soccer practice before hurrying home to get dinner on the table. All too soon we will be looking for something to fill the empty hours when the kids have left home. All too soon, empty seats will begin to appear around the table during the holidays.

We are not talking about a literal "slowing down" during holiday preparations, although applying this method to our drive times would not be a bad idea. Hands and feet must be busy to make all the necessary arrangements for a holiday gathering in the highly compressed and high speed days of modern life. What we are talking about is a down-shift of our attention. One of the down sides of living in a world driven by technology and information is that the sheer

volume of data we are required to process pushes our awareness away from the moment and into the future. We miss the current moment waiting for the next one and the next one. We have so many destinations that we have no time for the journey.

Don't let that happen this year. Not this time. Savor the moments - all of them. When we are crammed into the car with the kids and the green bean casserole, fighting traffic on the way to grandmother's house, let us be thankful that the family is together, thankful that grandma is still able to live at home. When we are frantically peeling potatoes and watching the kitchen timers, hoping that our guests don't arrive too early, be thankful that we have friends and family who think enough of us to cram their own kids into the car and fight traffic in order to see us. Be thankful that we have a home with a roof over it and food to spare that we can share.

Gratitude is powerful. Gratitude stops time in its tracks and allows all the fears, the worries and the expectations which obscure our moments to fall away and reveal that which is truly important in our lives. Gratitude transforms a rush into an adventure and hurry into moments that we will cherish for the rest of our lives. Happy Thanksgiving to all of you!



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

Thanksgiving blessings Psalm 103:1-5

The tradition of giving thanks is far older than the national holiday. Thanksgiving has its roots in the Holy Scriptures. There are many things for which to be thankful. Charles Lowery, a minister, writer and counselor said, "If you can't find anything to be thankful for, be thankful for your nose. Be thankful God put it on right side up. What if God had put it on upside down? If it rained you would drown and if you sneezed you would blow your thankless head off." One little boy said he was thankful for his glasses, "They keep little girls from kissing me and big boys from hitting me." Paul said, "In everything give thanks: For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thess. 5:18). David was in the second grade and having a really bad day. As he got on the bus he was bumped and suffered a scratch on the side of his face. At recess he collided with another boy and knocked loose two of his teeth. At lunchtime, while sliding on ice, he fell and broke his wrist. This time the school called David's father, who took him to the hospital. On the way to the hospital, his father noticed David was clutching something in his hand. "What do you have in your hand," his father asked. David said, "This is a quarter. I found it on the ground when I fell and broke my wrist. This is the first quarter I have ever found. Boy, is this my lucky day!" Of all the peoples of the world, Americans have the most for which to be thankful.

I personally thank God for my Spiritual heritage. I thank God that He sent a personal Savior who paid my sin debt on a cruel cross and through His sacrifice I possess everlasting life. I thank God that He has given me a Song in my heart: "Joy to the world the Lord has come." I thank God that He has given me a Star to follow: "I am the bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16). I thank God for Scriptures we can trust and not one word or promise will ever fail. I thank God for the Spirit of God that has been sent into our hearts that we can obey. I thank God for Saints we can love. I thank God that He has given us a Story to tell to our neighbors and to our nation and to the entire world.

I thank God for my spouse of 53 years. I thank God that He has blessed our marriage with a son, Mike, a daughter, Michele, and a son-in-law, Tim, and five grandchildren: Kristi, Kelli, Brooke, Stephanie, and Richard. I thank God for the church where I am a member.

I thank God to be an American. While there is much which could be improved in America, we still have the best of everything in the world. We have Almighty God to thank! We need to turn to Him and thank Him for His bounty of blessings upon America.

I am especially grateful for the Georgia Bulldogs winning the Southeastern Conference Eastern Division and looking forward to them beating Alabama. Happy Thanksgiving!!

"May your stuffing be tasty. May your turkey be plump. May your potatoes 'n gravy have nary a lump. May your yams be delicious. May your pies take the prize. May your Thanksgiving dinner stay off your thighs."

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

We recently completed the fall festival at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped make this event possible. While this is a project of the Towns County Lions Club, it takes many more than our membership to fill all the positions needed to serve our customers each day. That means many members of our community often volunteer to help with ticket sales, food booths, etc. Some worked half of a day, some worked all day and many more worked several days or every day to meet the needs of the festival.

As many of you know the Georgia Mountain Fair and its activities year round bring thousand of visitors to Towns County to visit, shop and eat. Without this attraction, I am sure many businesses in the county and the city of Hiawassee could not survive in the current economy. For this reason, a big shout out goes to our Towns County residents who support this effort every year. I hope the Towns County businesses realize how much the Georgia Mountain Fair helps support their business and that they consider this when we call for any assistance. In addition, realize that we know many of you have been very helpful over the years. With our mutual interest in the success of Towns County, we can all work together to make our community prosperous and vibrant.

Thanks to the Towns County Lions Club, the Towns County LEO Club, the Georgia Mountain Fair staff, The Georgia Mountain Fair Manager Hilda Thomason, the Towns County Commissioner, the Mayor of Hiawassee, and Towns County community for your continued support.

The Georgia Mountain Fair is a 501 (c) 3 organization created by the Towns County Lions Club for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public. Anyone wishing to donate a non-taxable gift to help sustain the GMF can mail their donation to the Georgia Mountain Fair, 1311 Music Hall Road, Hiawassee, GA 30546 or visit the office at the fairgrounds.

Doug Canup
Georgia Mountain Fair
Board of Directors

Shop Small Business Saturday

Small Business Saturday®, between Black Friday and Cyber Monday is November 24th, dedicated to the businesses that boost the economy and invigorate neighborhoods across the country. By supporting local, independently-owned small businesses, we're helping create jobs, boost the economy and preserve neighborhoods around the country. Last year, over one hundred million people shopped small on Small Business Saturday.

Top 10 reasons to shop local
#1: Buy local to support yourself: Studies show that when you buy from an independent, locally owned business, rather than a nationally owned business, significantly more of your money is used to make purchases from other local businesses, service providers and farms continuing to strengthen the economic base of the community.
#2: Keep our community unique: Where we shop, where we eat and have fun - all of it makes our community home. Our one-of-a-kind businesses are an integral part of the distinctive character of this place. Our tourism businesses also benefit.
#3: Be friendly to our environment: Locally owned businesses can make more local purchases requiring less transportation and generally set up shop in town or city centers as opposed to developing on the fringe. This generally means contributing less to sprawl, congestion, habitat loss and pollution.
#4: Local businesses create more jobs: Small local businesses are the largest employer nationally and in our community, provide the most jobs to residents.
#5: Get better service: Local businesses often hire people with a better understanding of the products they are selling and take more time to get to know customers.
#6: Put your taxes to good use: Local businesses require comparatively little infrastructure investment and make more efficient use of public services as compared to nationally owned stores entering the community. In addition, nationally owned businesses often demand tax incentives.
#7: Invest in the community: Local businesses are owned by people who live in this community, are less likely to leave, and are more invested in the community's future.
#8: Support community groups: Non-profit organizations receive an average 250% more support from smaller business owners than they do from large businesses.
#9: Competition leads to more choices: A marketplace of tens of thousands of small businesses is the best way to ensure innovation and low prices over the long-term. A multitude of small businesses, each selecting products based not on a national sales plan but on their own interests and the needs of their local customers, guarantees a much broader range of product choices.
#10: Encourage future investment: A growing body of economic research shows that in an increasingly homogenized world, entrepreneurs and skilled workers are more likely to invest and settle in communities that preserve their one-of-a-kind businesses and distinctive character.

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.

On a dollar-for-dollar basis, the local economic impact of independently owned businesses is significantly greater than that of national chains. Researchers have found that every \$100 spent at locally owned businesses contributes an additional \$68 to the local economy.

Shop Small this November 24th and learn more at ShopSmall.com.

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Have you used a bar of Ivory soap lately? Strange question. But I have a reason for asking. Although I haven't seen an ad for Ivory in years I still remember their advertising slogan. "It floats." So?

Well, when the chemists were developing Ivory long ago (when even I was young), they were surprised to discover that the combination of ingredients actually caused it to float on top of the water. No other bar soap did that. One of the scientists explained: "The alkaline elements and vegetable fats ...are blended...in such a way...that keeps it on top of the water, relieving the bather of the trouble and annoyance of fishing around for it in the bottom during his ablutions (bath)." When the marketing people read his comments, one of them translated it to say simply, "It floats." Brilliant; it sold a gazillion bars of soap.

If you ever speak in public you already know that less is usually more. Brief is often more effective than long. In fact, more is often less. So it is with our kids. "No" can be a complete sentence. Our kids are able to spot long attempts to persuade them as a sign of uncertainty on our part, so it invites them to push back and argue.

Six-year old Susan

asks if she can sleepover at a friend's house. An appropriate answer might be, "Daddy and I have talked it over and decided that's not a good idea right now." End of sentence. "Why, Mom, why?" Susan responds. Should Mom come up with a nine-page answer detailing the reasons behind the parental edict? Nope. Mom and Dad have spoken, that's reason enough. More is less. Mom looks at Susan, tilts her head, raises her eyebrows, and continues what she was doing. Discussion over. It floats so you don't need to give the formula.

When Susan is 14, Mom's response may be a little different, but just a little. Something like, "Not tonight, honey, it's a school night. Let's talk about it later and see if we can make it work some weekend, or maybe on a holiday." Susan replies, "Oh, Mom, you never let me have any fun." Mom, totally unflapped by the response and not willing to be drawn into an argument on this new topic either, says, "I know, honey. And if I was 14 I'd probably feel just like you do. But that's our answer." More would be less.

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

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