

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY
OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

\$10 tag fee for trauma centers?

We have joined together as representatives of Georgia's business community to implore you to support initiatives that will create an adequate, dedicated source of funding for state-wide trauma care.

This is a matter not only critical to the health of our citizens, but also of our economy.

The facts speak for themselves. Our state has only 15 trauma care centers when we need at least 25 given our size and population. Trauma patients have the highest chance of full and quick recovery if treated within the "golden hour," and millions of our citizens would need at least two hours of travel time to reach a trauma unit. Today, only 25% of trauma patients are treated in facilities appropriate to their level of injury.

With vehicle collisions responsible for nearly half of all cases in Georgia, everyone is at risk of needing trauma services. And the second leading cause is industrial accidents. What responsible business person is going to willingly locate a company in a place where their employees may not be able to get the help they need?

While our existing hospitals and doctors have done their best to fill the gaps, we simply will not be able to continue to attract companies to our state if we cannot guarantee access to quality trauma care.

Patients taken to trauma care facilities have a significantly increased chance of survival and faster recovery because they are treated by specially trained doctors with access to the proper equipment. Hospital stays are shorter and therefore less expensive, which helps keep overall costs down - including insurance rates. As today's economy forces more Georgians into the ranks of the uninsured, we will all soon feel the growing cost of unpaid medical care.

The time to act on this critical issue is now. There are several proposals currently before you that would allow Georgia to benefit from not only an increased number of trauma care centers, but also the kind of communications and transport systems that can help get the injured to the right hospital in the shortest amount of time.

One proposal in particular, the implementation of a \$10 vehicle tag fee, would generate approximately \$80 million annually, enough to fund the kind of trauma care network our state needs. We urge you to support this concept, which was passed by the Senate on Tuesday and has been introduced in the House, as it represents a feasible, sustainable source of funding for this critical need.

The longer we wait - the more lives, time and money we lose.

Phil Jacobs

Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals (Atlanta)

Herald columnist writes farewell

Publisher Kenneth West
 Editors Charles Duncan, Jeff Edge, and Carl Vanzura

Dear Sirs,

I wish to thank you for running my column, "Remembrances" in your Towns County Herald for some time.

It is my hope the elderly readers will see through their "mind's eye" the things that happened to them, say eighty years ago.

In my original folder I wrote: I write this so our children and their children, if interested, may have some insight on things that were said, things that happened, and words that are no longer spoken. I'm writing what I remember, saw and I guess felt. Yours truly,

James V. Parker, Sr.

House of Manna says thank you

The House of Manna at No. Mt. Zion Church of God has operated a food pantry for those in need in our community for several years. We would like to thank everyone who supported us in 2008 when the need grew so much.

Through your donations and support of our fundraisers the House of Manna provided groceries to 3,338 families during 2008. These families included a total of 8,873 people of which 2,686 were children. This is a 345% increase over the 967 families assisted in 2007. During previous years the House of Manna was not opened during the summer months but due to the need during 2008 that was not an option.

As you can imagine the economy and jobless situation has dramatically increased the number of families needing assistance during this past year - we are seeing many more working families where the parents have lost their jobs, especially in the construction field. We have a significant number of seniors in our area living on a very minimal social security income - our assistance is vital to them.

We have been very blessed to continue to get our groceries through the Athens Food Bank at a basic rate of \$.18 per pound - this includes canned goods, milk products, snacks and meat products. We also have benefited from taking advantage of additional mobile food drive groceries which we get at the approximate cost of \$.03 per pound, as well as, ordering and acquiring fresh vegetables, bread products and overstocked items for free.

None of this could have been accomplished without your support, a Pastor with a vision and the grace of God.

Please continue to keep the House of Manna and it's mission to provide food for local families in need in your prayers in 2009.

Thank you again for your support,

Sally Varao & All the Workers at House of Manna

Towns County Herald

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The Middle Path

by Don Perry

There is an ongoing discussion between engineers, scientists and planners about whether the future of energy should follow the same patterns that developed alongside the Interstate highway, utilizing new technology to make long distance transmission lines more efficient, or whether there should be a fundamental shift towards locally produced energy, closer to the places where it is needed. "Smart grid" technology is the key to making whichever method is emphasized more efficient. A report sanctioned by the Department of Energy estimates that as little as a five percent improvement in the efficiency of the United States electrical grid would represent a savings in fuel and carbon emissions equal to the elimination of 53 million cars.

"Smart grid" is a term which encompasses a variety of technologies which can be used to modernize our electrical grid to make it more stable, more flexible and more efficient. These are technologies which facilitate demand side management to reduce power consumption during peak hours and which enable better load balancing to eliminate cascading failures such as we have seen in recent years when demand exceeded capacity. Smart grid technology also makes it possible for local power producers such as small wind farms or rooftop solar panels to connect to the grid, further enhancing capacity and efficiency, not to mention financial independence.

The electric grid in the United States grew up around widely distributed power generation facilities including coal fired generators and nuclear power plants. Advances in solar and wind technology combined with higher energy prices are beginning to make it economically feasible to replace many of the non-renewable power sources with sustainable, non polluting sources. One of the plans on the table now is to build gigantic solar arrays in western states which have abundant sunshine and to feed that power into a national smart grid. However, one of the biggest challenges inherent in long distance power transmission is the losses which occur over high voltage transmission lines. New technologies including high voltage direct current transmission and high temperature superconducting cables will address this problem and make it more feasible to transmit power from huge solar arrays and wind farms onto the grid.

These solutions are expensive and they require big government and/or big business to achieve. They are not inherently wrong - and they will likely be part of the overall solution, but from a larger perspective this kind of approach to a problem is still part of the

unsustainable paradigm which has painted life on earth into the unsustainable corner which we now inhabit, where the only move out is through the wall. The "wall" in our own corner of the globe is the layer upon layer of vested interests which line the avenues of power from the local to the national level. These vested interests will likely create a tremendous inertia and resistance to change as the industries and interests dependent on the status quo fight for survival. Proactive change, as facilitated by our current financial/political power structure, will likely happen only when it serves to enrich established interests - no matter what the speech makers might say.

However, change is inevitable. The financial "roof" is facing imminent collapse after decades of expansion built on credit borrowed from future generations, so we will be moving sooner or later - but in what direction? We are hopeful that the current Administration will be able to soften the coming collapse and delay it for as long as possible, but the language of Obama, Wall Street and the confusing array of financial and political mouthpieces is still the language of the old paradigm. The conventional "wisdom" insists that we are experiencing a temporary setback of unknown duration before we ultimately return to business as usual, but the numbers tell a different story: Six billion human beings on a shrinking planet undergoing significant climatic changes; something in excess of \$400 trillion of pretend money, the value of which depends entirely upon the collective agreement that the emperor is wearing clothes - and the undeniable fact that the petroleum upon which our entire civilization is built is a finite and diminishing resource.

My coffeemaker, which represents one of the uses of electrical power most dear to me, does not care whether its power comes from Nevada or from my own rooftop. I think that a significant step away from fossil fuels is a positive step, even if it is a step taken by bigger government or bigger industry. However, in some areas of the world a consensus is forming that the microgeneration of power, which includes active solar water heating, ground source heat pumps, bio-energy, combined heat-power (CHP) systems and fuel cells, is the best answer for the individual and for the planet. It is compatible with the growth of a new paradigm which stresses local networks of energy, goods and services over the long distance distributions dependent on petroleum that this generation grew up with.

In the interim, however, I will be shopping for affordable solar panels and adding them to my collection as finances allow. I will be replacing incandescent bulbs, first with CFL's and then with LED lighting, turning the water heater thermostat down, and wearing more clothes instead of turning up the heat when it's cool. I will be eating out less



T.C. Herald Editor faces open heart surgery

By Charles Duncan

I lay here short of breath, hoping for a future.

I'm just hours away from having my chest cut open with the hopes that a new aortic valve will give me a new lease on life.

My recent health issues and septic blood stream led to a damaged aortic valve. Dr. Daniel Winston, chief surgeon at the Ronnie Green Heart Center in Gainesville was scheduled to perform my surgery on Monday. My life was placed in gifted hands.

After more than a month here in this hospital, I finally see a light at the end of the tunnel as I await my surgery.

I long to return to work; I long to return home and I long to spend time with my family, friends and coworkers.

I want to thank the many people who have called, sent flowers or cards or those who came by in person to wish me well.

I want to thank the doctors and nurses who have toiled many hours to keep me alive.

Most of all, I want to thank my personal Savior, Jesus Christ for giving me the

strength to keep keeping on.

I'm a firm believer that we're all still here for a reason. There was ample opportunity for me to check out of this world long before March 16, the date of my heart surgery.

I'm a firm believer that I have some more work to do here on this earth long before I hang my hat at the doors of those beautiful Pearly Gates.

I want to thank all who have prayed for me and continue to pray for my personal well being.

I'm ready to meet my maker, but I'm not sure my maker is ready for me to come home just yet.

My maker has grand plans for the Towns County Herald and I'm certain he wants me to be around to help carry out those work orders.

Kenneth and Liz West have been talking with the Good Lord and they asked him to keep me around to help.

It would be an honor to stick around and help out two of the best people I've ever known in my life.

Here's hoping and praying that I get that chance.

Remembrances

Brasstown Manor resident 92-year-old James Parker recalls his childhood in Honea Path, South Carolina



The Herald regretfully announces that the column, "Remembrances" by James Parker will no longer run in our newspaper.

Over a year ago, Mr. Parker came to the Herald with his memories previously written and organized. At first, the newspaper had a handful of columnists and had to politely decline Parker's offer. However, the Towns County Herald did eventually find a need and a space for Parker's short yet poignant sketches of life in the early 20th Century.

It took a few months, but we have run all of Parker's written memories. We hope you have enjoyed reading Parker's columns as much as we have enjoyed presenting them to you.



IT'S CRAZY CRAZY WEATHER

What is that I see peeping around the corner? When we are outside that it is so much warmer. The daffodils are popping up all over the fields. The peach trees are beginning to bud, the birds are scratching the ground for fat juicy grubs. That is their treat. The poor old farmer scratches his head. "Lordy, Mercy what am I going to do" he said. The weatherman is calling for snow again. But it's time to get the garden plowed and he tatters in the ground. The woman needs to get the peas planted. Law, Mercy guess the better be snow peas. Better sit down and have a cup of coffee and talk this matter over with Flossy. Bessie Abaswood March 11, 2009



Deadline for the Herald is Monday by noon.

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 TO:

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, P.O. Box 365, Hiwassee, GA 30546, Our E-Mail Address:

tcherald@brmemc.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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- Gov. Sonny Perdue, Georgia State Capitol, Atlanta, GA. 30334, 404-656-1776.
- Sen. Johnny Isakson, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-3643.
- Sen. Saxby Chambliss, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-3521.
- U.S. Congressman Paul Broun, 10th District, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-4101.
- Rep. Stephen Allison, Georgia House of Representatives, 404-656-0177 or 0185.
- Sen. Jim Butterworth, Georgia State Senate, 404-463-1367.
- 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 Ricky Mathis, 706-896-6254.
- Enotah Circuit District Attorney Stan Gunter, 706-896-6489.
- Board of Education: 706-896-2279, Michael Anderson, Donna Hedden, Bob Gibby, Larry Kimsey, Emily Phillips. Superintendent: Dr. Richard Berhens.
- Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis, 706-896-2202.
- HW- City Council: Janet Allen, Jay Chastain, Joan Crothers, Howard Cunningham, Annie Johnson.
- Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby, 706-379-3171.
- YH City Council: Terry Ingram, Donald Keys, Matthew Miller, Jennifer Mulkey, David Sellers.