

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY
OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Words, words, words

The best among us, with the use of language, talking TV heads, politicians and occasionally professors, do it. There are words that constantly get tangled up in their vocabulary and some of them are: era error, regime and regimen.

Listen and you will frequently hear error used for era. Hardly any of the above pronounce the word era when they mean a "Point in time". It nearly always comes out error as in a mistake.

The word regime is often used for regimen or vice versa. Time after time you will hear someone say he or she "climbed down". You can only climb up. You climb a ladder. You descend a ladder or hill, etc.

Here is a mispronounced one that is ubiquitous among talking heads: they nearly always say preventative instead of preventive. Oh my gosh! According to my dictionary, both are correct.

Enough of this already - I'm going to climb down my stairs and mow the lawn.

Clarence Newton

Lowe's in Towns County, a blessing or ?

I appreciated the article recently that looked at the other side of the issue, naming a few of the businesses in the county that have been here for many years and are considered, by me, to be the stable businesses of the community.

I recently asked a person trained in finances and economical issues this question, "What will be the impact of a Lowe's moving into Towns County?" He stated that initially there would be an increase in jobs, but in 3 to 5 years the employment numbers would probably be the same as before Lowe's came. The reason would not be because the old established businesses and the small ones will not be able to compete, but because they do not have the buying power. They will either have to reduce the number of employees or close.

By the way, when you borrow from the bank, guess whose money it is that you or we borrow. It is the old established businesses and people that leave their money and their profits in the county.

Companies such as Lowe's, Walmart, and Home Depot use the local banks as a place to transfer their money to a home bank, which is not in Towns or Union County.

Bob Gibby

Questions and Answers

from the desk of

Commissioner Bill Kendall



Question: I am having trouble understanding the Homeowners Tax Relief Grant and why it seems to have changed?

Answer: For the past 10 years, in addition to the regular \$2,000 exemption the State has funded an additional \$8,000 resulting in the homeowner receiving a \$10,000 Homestead Tax Exemption. Due to State revenue shortfall Gov. Perdue eliminated the grant from his budget. However, this week the Governor and the legislature approved funds for the 2008 tax bill.

Question: Does this mean there will be a tax increase on my home for the 2009 tax bill?

Answer: Yes - there is pending legislation that would eliminate State funding for 2009 and future funding unless there is a substantial increase in State revenue. Homeowners will see a tax increase as it now stands. I have passed a resolution asking our State Representative Stephen Allison and State

Senator Jim Butterworth to pass local legislation that gives Towns County voters an opportunity to vote to permanently increase their Homestead Exemption to \$10,000, which would off-set the change resulting from the loss of State funding. If this legislation is approved and voted in by the voters before the 2009 tax bills are approved and sent out there will not be a tax increase on your home as a result of the State not funding the Homestead Tax Relief Grant.

Towns County has the highest percentage of seniors in the state who are retired and living on a fixed income. I firmly believe they, along with all other homeowners including the very young just starting out, should have an opportunity to vote whether or not to pay any tax on the first \$10,000 of tax assessment placed on the house they live in, which is one of the three basic necessities of life: food, clothing and shelter.



News from the Principal
 Roy Perren
 Principal
 Towns County High School



On May 22, seventy-two Seniors walked across the stage in the commencement ceremony at Towns County High School. We wish them all the best as they leave this place and take their place in the world. We are proud of each and every one of them.

The school year just completed was a memorable year. We received academic awards such as the Governor's Cup for greatest increase in SAT scores among Class A schools in the State of Georgia. We were thrilled when Governor Sonny Perdue visited our school to personally award the trophy to us. Our graduation rate was close to 90%, well above the state and national average. This group of Seniors will receive over a million dollars in scholarships over the next four years for academic and athletic excellence. Our FBLA had several state winners who will go on to represent our school and Georgia at the FBLA National Leadership Conference. We also reached several athletic milestones. Our Lady Indians Basketball team made it to the Elite Eight. Our Lady Indians Cross Country team went to state. One of wrestlers, Timmy Collier finished among the top in his weight class in the state. Our Indians football team set had a record breaking year going 7-3. Towns County High School was chosen as the Fox 5 Atlanta Team of the Week last October.

As great as the year past was, we must now focus on the year ahead. Even though school is not in session, this is a very busy time of year at Towns County High School as we plan and prepare for next year. We will be welcoming close to 90 students from the middle school to the 9th grade next year. We will have a meeting in the auditorium at 7 PM on Thursday, July 30 for the parents of upcoming 9th graders. At that meeting we will discuss graduation requirements, the 9th grade curriculum, and requirements for the HOPE scholarship. At the meeting we will also present an orientation to high school and issue tentative schedules to 9th grade students whose parents are in attendance.

We are looking for additional parent representatives for our local school council for next year. The school council usually meets four times over the course of the school year. If you are interested, please let me know.

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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, PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Our email 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.

Extension Tips



by
 Robert
 Brewer

Plan ahead for home canning

If you are thinking about joining the trend in our communities to can food this summer, start by checking your equipment and supplies. Proper equipment in good condition is essential for safe, high quality home canned food.

A pressure canner is essential for canning low-acid vegetables, meats, fish, and poultry. Two basic types are available. One has a dial gauge to indicate the pressure inside the canner; the other has a metal weighted gauge. Dial gauges must be tested for accuracy before each canning season. For information on testing a dial gauge, call your county Extension agent. Check the rubber gasket; it should be flexible and soft, not brittle, sticky or cracked. Also make sure any small pipes with openings are clean and open all the way through.

A boiling water canner is needed for canning other foods such as fruits, pickles, jellies and jams. The canner should be deep enough to allow at least one inch of water to boil over the tops of the jars. Both types of canners should have a rack in the bottom to keep jars off the bottom of the canner.

Inventory your jars and decide if you need to buy new jars this year. Inspect those you have for nicks, cracks or chips, especially around the top sealing edge. Nicks can prevent lids from sealing. Very old jars can weaken with age and use and break under pressure and heat. Consider investing in new jars if you need to, and watch for specials.

A must for every canning season is new flat lids. Used lids should be thrown away. The screw bands are re-usable if they are not bent, dented or rusted.

A final must is reliable, UP-TO-DATE canning instructions. Publications, and information are available at your county Extension office.

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service also sells "So Easy to Preserve," a comprehensive book with information on all types of home food preservation. Information about that book is also available for order at your county Extension office.

Be sure to look at the instructions for what you want to can before you are ready to prepare the food. You may need time to purchase some ingredients and small equipment needed to prepare food exactly as the directions indicate. Planning ahead can save you time, money, and frustration with home canning.

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.



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 the T.C. Herald
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 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
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 Enotah Circuit District Attorney Stan Gunter, 706-896-6489
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Towns County Herald

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