

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

**To the Editor:**  
As the old saying out West goes, "As the West Coast does, so will the East Coast sooner or later". This was basically true at one time with music, fashions, new trends, economics, food trends, etc.

A lot has changed over the years, however, the East is beginning to feel the pinch the West has already felt. Water shortages, water rights between States, housing prices, foreclosures, real estate slump, tourism down, illegal immigrants, governmental overspending and debt (which in effect hurts the States and the counties). State budget cuts and debt, which then counteracts what the counties can and want to do. This then reflects in their budget crisis and need to increase taxes. The counties feel they need to keep up with the "Jones" and create more debt for the people. Continued spending in a "recession", creating more burden on the "taxpayer"-who is now feed up; the buck stops with the bottom-the taxpayer, tourist, retired people/poor folks.

Now to enlighten everyone on the present factors. The West is cutting back on everything: furloughs, services, equipment, police and fire. Several cities have closed/laid off their entire departments, even police and fire. Can this happen here-sure it can-all of City Hall out of work. The State of North Carolina and Georgia have continued cuts on every and anything. In the Clay County paper-\$300,000 cut to education-yet the county is still going ahead with a \$10 million dollar school building project. Ill timing in a "recession"-taxpayers and tourists pay the bill.

More in the paper-Union County approves "full" alcohol sales. The net effect is lost sales to Cherokee, Clay, and Towns Counties. Does this have a future effect on taxes, impact on money received, etc. Sure it does! Has any of the county commissioners thought of this situation?

More in the paper-Clay County Progress, on the back page of Thursday, July 29, 2010, page B10 is a Legal Notice from the county advertising "transportation hearings"-in SPANISH, are the taxpayers paying for all the immigrants to read this? This advertising policy has been in effect for years out West...almost everything is in English/Spanish. Now here we have it here, more for the taxpayer. Yet the county/state has cut back on services to the roads, mowing on the sides is poor and horrible, especially at intersections---overgrown and can't be seen around because of trees and brush.

One more thing...I love the Towns County Herald, "The Middle Path" with Don Perry is usually great, all of the papers should have this articles/editorial. It is interesting to see what goes on around the area. Lately all of the papers have had articles of the pros and cons of the rate increase by Blue Ridge Mountain Electric (BRMEMC). Like all agencies/government that have over expanded and over extended their "debt"; we now feel the pinch because--we conserve electricity, the tourists are not coming in droves or are trying to sell out, foreclosures, builders out of business, the economy, etc. The "locals" who live here all year are going to pay for this recession.

Don Perry's article on this subject- July 28, 2010 was excellent as usual and to the point. He was correct in most areas; he forgot two (2) key areas. 1. This "new increased" "customer charge" on the July bill (roughly a 69% increase), say Blue Ridge has roughly-8,000 customers per county (MOL), or gets \$144,000 (MOL) per month (serving three + counties), that amounts to \$1,728,000 per year (MOL). Whose says you aren't paying for the new or old debt they incurred. I'll wager it's more than I can imagine! This amount is only on the "customer charge"...not the rate increase itself!

Now the real kicker....as has been done for years out West, they have gotten into more debt with the new meters....Why? In order to start billing you for "PEAK DEMAND". They can now sit in the comfort of the office and see how much "power" is being used EVERY HOUR OF THE DAY, not just TOTAL electricity used per month. Out West, you could opt out of some of this by "regulating" your daily usage with a meter counter/suppressor. I won't go into this...ask the EMC, because I am sure they will get to this shortly after you digest the current rate hikes. More for expansion, new site, more out of your pockets down the road.

We are in a "recession" folks and it is only going to get worse--remember this in election time, EMC Board of Governors, etc. as you vote in your County/State. I will bet the newspapers, several of them, will be afraid to print this!

Gary Thurston

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

One of the luxuries of youth is the desire to live forever coupled with the feeling that it just might be possible. (If you don't believe that the young think they are immortal, just watch them drive.) Over time most of us gradually begin to consider allowing ourselves to be pried loose from the mortal coil. Our health begins to fail. Those whom we love the most begin to depart. Life changes faster than we can adapt and we begin to fear.

This morning my own desire for immortality was temporarily compromised. The intrusion came in an unexpected form: I read a report describing how the Interstate 3 project is still alive and well in the backrooms of political pork and the multi-million dollar "study" of possible routes is set to proceed. Don't get me wrong. I'm not planning to chain myself to a tree in protest, though protest I will. It's not that my desire to live is dependent upon whether another pork barrel highway is built or not. No, the chill in the air this morning is from what is portended should this ill considered highway actually be built.

Our overcrowded and overheated planet is already choked with pollution and ravaged by the search for fuel to burn and metal to bend to supply the needs of 6.3 billion.

At home our national attention deficit disorder, which requires us to be constantly moving, instantly gratified and permanently stimulated, is now spreading rapidly in India and China. China just recently passed the United States as the world's number one consumer of energy, but this is a function of sheer numbers and not of per capita consumption. If a billion more Indians and Chinese suddenly gained the ability to drive 50 miles to the outlet store to buy a sweater in the summer because the air conditioning at work is too cold, the planet would likely become uninhabitable.

The point is, from here on the competition for fossil fuel will become increasingly intense because of increasing worldwide demand - and the fossil fuel that is available is not the easy-to-get variety that accelerated us through the last fifty years. It is the

expensive and risky kind still washing ashore along the Gulf Coast, though our attention has already turned elsewhere. Much of the oil that is left is offshore under deep water, or under permafrost, or deposited in low concentrations in sand and shale which requires terraforming on a scale that dwarfs coal mining practices to extract.

The outlet mall economy has failed, but the rationale behind the miles of concrete and asphalt connecting one cluster of Citigos and Cracker Barrels to the next is still alive in the backroom bubba politician's dream of an unnecessary highway from Savannah to Knoxville. To spend tens of billions of dollars of money that we don't have on any transportation project other than mass transit approaches criminal insanity.

The I-3 study is mandated by law and funded by the SAFETEA-LU Transportation Department funding Act of 2005, so it will proceed no matter what public opinion might hold. Sane heads have prevailed in North Carolina and Tennessee, both of which have declined any further participation in this boondoggle. Every county in North Georgia which is on a proposed route has resolutions against the project. The completion of the study is not a guarantee that the project will proceed and organizations such as Waysouth, formerly the Stop I-3 Coalition, will monitor the study to make sure that it is valid.

Chances are that the continuing economic "adjustment" we are experiencing will preclude any new \$50 billion highways. To survive as a nation we must look beyond fossil fuel and we must develop an economy that is not dependent on driving long distances to buy cheap Chinese manufactured goods. This is unavoidable, but even when change is inevitable it is always resisted by those who profit from the status quo. Politics and road building have long been bedfellows in Georgia, so as long as there is any chance that I-3 might be built, don't expect it to go easily.



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

### My name, your name, His name

As a teenager, my first paying job was in a grocery store. The instructions that I received there have been beneficial for all of my life. I was taught that people are important. It was drilled into my head that if a business was successful you had to please your customers. The first way to please a customer was to learn his/her name and greet them by name each time you saw them. People like to be addressed by their name. They resent being spoken to as "Hey You" or Hey Buddy." Well, that lesson stuck in my head and I have practiced that through all the years of my ministry. As I have grown older one of my greatest blessings is recalling the names of friends and loved ones that I have known over the years. The Bible says that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.." (Pro. 22:1). Of course, our names were chosen for us but we should so live that the very mention of our names would be a blessing to others. It is sad but some people have to live down their reputation. Have you ever wondered how people respond when your name is mentioned in a group? It is something to think about. The name Judas evokes sadness to most of us. What about Benedict Arnold? Maybe anger? Some names like Kraft, Welch, Bush, Stokely, Colgate, etc., remind you of products rather than individuals. Some names remind you of principles, or promises rather than personalities. A few people I

have known didn't like their names and some have had their names legally changed. I heard about a fellow named William Stinks who went before the judge to have his name changed. The judge sort of chuckled and asked what he wished to change his name to. His answer was Bill Stinks. There are some names that are so familiar that people are taken for granted. In a large city newspaper, the personal section, an ad ran that read, "I will not be responsible for any debts incurred by anyone other than myself," signed John Smith. The very next day, in the same section of the paper, an ad ran which read, "Don't worry, John with a name like yours nobody could get any credit anyway." Usually, our names stick with us all through life. Our citizenship name is recorded on our birth certificate and when we die that name is on the death certificate and engraved on the headstone where we are buried. We know the names of great men and women: kings, queens, presidents, authors, painters, politicians, preachers, musicians, explorers, the rich and the famous and all are important. But there is a name that is above every name and His name is Jesus. The Bible says at the mention of His name every knee should bow (Phil. 2:10) because God has given Him a name that is above every name (Phil. 2:9). The Bible also says that His name is the only name given among men, under heaven whereby they can be saved from their sin (Acts 4:12). I don't plan on changing my name while in this life, but I will have a new name when my citizenship is changed from earth to heaven. Your name and my name are important, but the sweetest name I know is Jesus. Do you know Him?



## ASK DR. DON

By Don Jacobsen

**Q:** How do I get my kids to show me more respect. My teen is worst but my middle school son is quickly learning from her and is disrespectful, too. What suggestions do you have?

**A:** You have just described an epidemic among America's kids. I hear questions like yours everywhere I go. And parents are not the only ones; teachers are feeling it, too. So are law enforcement people, and, well, adults just about everywhere. So, what needs to happen?

Let me disappoint you and say that there is no quick fix. There is no pill we can slip in their milk and tomorrow morning they'll wake up respectful and obedient. There is no magic elixir. But here's what we need to do to be moving in the right direction.

Kids need two things from us: Love and Leadership. After about the age of two years

parents must provide, not love and servanthood. Not love and valet service. Not love and a full-time taxi driver. Not love and a live-in problem-solver. Rather, love and leadership. At that time in the child's life parents must transition to the mind-set that says, I have been meeting your every need for two years, but from now on I am not going to do anything for you that you can learn to do for yourself. The toddler will look in vain for the sign that has been hanging around Mom's neck which said, "I am your Mother; give me my assignment."

See, here's the deal: We tend not to respect servants. But the decade from two years to twelve is the window during which our kids must learn to see us as leaders. More on just how that works next time.

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

### 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.*



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