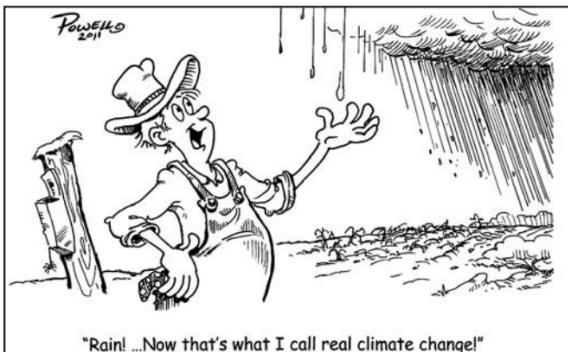


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor

Finally something new and beautiful at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds! The new park and plantings at the fairgrounds are exciting! We have been attending the fair for 6 years and for the first time we had an outdoor amphitheater to sit in and relax while listening to terrific music. The plantings throughout the area were gorgeous. We look forward to many more new and beautiful things happening at the fairgrounds. This will surely breathe new life and bring more patrons into the fairgrounds. Thank you to all that made this happen. Also thank you to Paul and Catherine Hansen for a refreshing and interesting landscape design.

Jerry and Rebecca Fisher

Letter to the Editor

Animal overpopulation--the crisis can be solved
There are estimated to be 170 million companion pets in homes today, but there are also around 4 million being euthanized this year. This is a staggering number to animal lovers, but this number is down from 20 million before 1970.

The change is due to the aggressive adopt-a-pet campaigns every day in cities all over the country, AND spaying and neutering playing the biggest role in saving lives. Many public shelters, such as Towns-Union Mountain Shelter in Blairsville, does not euthanize healthy animals, but they do spay and neuter all the animals before they are adopted out. Many states require companion dogs and cats to be sterilized (breeders are exempt). Georgia shelters are now routinely sending some of their homeless animals to these states as they have a shortage of adoptable dogs and cats.

Medical procedures have changed dramatically in the past half-century. Veterinarians now only make a one or two-inch incision and use self-absorbing sutures, meaning a much quicker recovery for the animals, so your animal is running around in short order. Don't let your dog or cat have its first litter--it's an old wives tale and just greatly adds to overpopulation. If you want your kids to have a puppy or kitten, adopt it from a shelter and save one.

A lot of people in Towns County have also changed their thinking about spaying and neutering animals, showing more responsibility in keeping unwanted animals from being neglected, killed by running wild, or starving and freezing to death. Education by animal organizations has helped in this regard.

PUP, (Prevent Unwanted Pets) is a non-profit 501(c)3 group doing humane animal education in the schools and helping Towns County residents to spay and neuter their animals and strays. If you need our help call 1-888-496-2387. We can do this because of fund-raisers we hold and we do appreciate the generosity we receive from Towns County citizens in helping to end animal over-population.

*Members of Operation PUP
Marsha Grogan, President*



**RARE KIDS;
WELL DONE**
By Don Jacobsen

Q: Dr. Don, can you give me some breakfast ideas please. My two daughters rush around till the last minute in the morning and then don't take the time to eat. I know it's not good for them, but I don't want to make them miss their bus. Maybe the school should fix breakfast for them like they do lunch?

A: Maybe it's not breakfast ideas you need; maybe it's schedule ideas. You haven't told me how old your daughters are, but a couple of columns back I wrote about turning the morning schedule over to your children and getting them be responsible for letting out of bed, doing their chores, eating, etc. If they miss the bus, they miss the bus. But building 15 minutes for breakfast into the morning schedule should be a non-negotiable.

It's really important for your cherubs to eat breakfast. And not something with frosting on it! Excess sugar isn't good for them, and the scant nutrition it provides burns off early in the day and they lose their mental alertness, not a

good situation for kids trying to learn something. It doesn't have to be fancy, it just needs to be nutritional.

When I talk to parents on this subject I often get the reply, "Well, my little Jeremy will only eat Triple Whammy Custard Puffs for breakfast so that's what I fix for him." I have a question for that Mom: Since when do you have to have a consultation with an eight-year old (or 5 or 12) over what's on the menu? As soon as it's doable, teach them to read the labels on the boxes in the cereal aisle. Explain what to look for. Make a game out of it.

This may help: You can tell them you talked to the doctor (me) and he said that if they miss breakfast they will need more sleep, so if they miss breakfast in the morning, that night they go to bed an hour early. Parents tell me they generally find that strategy highly motivational.

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

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Change is... Fill in the blank with just about any word and you will have some nugget of truth. Change is coming. Change is difficult, frightening, and welcome. Change is inevitable. Change...IS. How we respond to it is the pivotal point that determines the quality of our lives. How we think about it moves the tides of civilization.

Fear of change is fear of the future, and such fear can motivate conservative politics past a healthy respect for tradition and the status quo, just as dissatisfaction with the status quo can motivate liberal politics into ill-considered ventures. In my youth I wanted growth and a constantly changing status quo and anything which promised to remove any kind of political, economic or cultural restraint was welcome. We have a tendency to become more conservative as we get older. If we are fortunate and our status quo has improved over the years, we certainly want to conserve that state, and as the growing number of candles on the birthday cake begins to light the edges of the Abyss, a growing sense of dread can replace the sense of possibility that greeted the new days of our youth.

I am young enough to look forward to the future and old enough to be bewildered by some of the channels into which the energy of our youth has flowed. Sitting in a restaurant the other night the odd postures of a group of young women at a nearby table caught my attention. At first glance their bowed heads and oddly positioned arms seemed to be some kind of ritual genuflection, but on closer examination I discovered that all four of these women were holding smart phones. They were carrying on a conversation with each other while simultaneously keeping an eye and a thumb busy communicating into the ether.

Judging from the flood of information that washes over my Facebook page, there is a good chance that at least one person in the

group was letting the world know that she was now at O'Charley's. Jane Doe is now driving home. Jane Doe is now going to bed. I don't know why that this type of information is important enough to share with potentially hundreds of people or important enough that, on this particular evening, the waitress had to wait for the woman to finish her post before taking her order. Have you ever been interrupted in mid-sentence by someone who reaches into their buzzing or singing pocket to read a note or answer a call from an unseen entity? This type of behavior is not new, but it continues to baffle me, while at the same time it impresses me as someone who must still concentrate to walk and chew gum at the same time.

Our constantly connected society is on the cusp of fundamental changes in how we communicate. Change is welcome. Governments will find it harder to lie in secrecy. Change is frightening. Governments will find it easier to monitor and spy. Information will raise people from ignorance and poverty. Information will destroy privacy. We do not know which way the waves will break, but history teaches us that our condition is nothing new. Every technological advance has changed us, and we have always been divided in our anticipation of and response to that change.

Liberal thinking is the party of Icarus, who flew too close to the sun. Conservative thinking is the party of Daedalus, who warned his son of the dangers of pushing the limits too soon. Without the wisdom and experience of Daedalus, the ability to fly to the highest point would not exist. Without Icarus, we would still be earthbound for fear of the unknown.

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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@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.



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

Physicians of no value

Have you ever seen so much sickness in all of your life? I am not referring just to physical sickness but to a general epidemic of sickness that has infected every strata of society. As a minister I feel that I know more sick folks than I do healthy individuals. Most churches believe in praying for the sick. If you don't believe it you just attend almost any church and you will find them praying for the healing and comfort of family, friends, co-workers, acquaintances and even strangers. For most of us, praying for the sick is serious business. But there are some humorous moments in dealing with the sick. For instance, have you ever heard a minister say, "We need to pray for all of those sick in the bulletin?" Can't you just see all of those sick people piled up in the bulletin? While we have multitudes that are suffering from various diseases there are some people who are not really sick but just "enjoy poor health." They use health as an excuse for copping out of life. One man said if he gave his wife the option of a week in Hawaii or the hospital, she would choose the hospital every time. Some people don't want to be well. Jesus asked a man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years, "Do you want to be healed?" (John 5:5 ESV) Of course, those who just fain sicknesses "are sick" and we should pray for them too. There is also such a thing as homesickness. A counselor was observing a moping kid at summer camp. He said, "Son, are you homesick?" The kid said, "No, I am here sick, if I were home I wouldn't be sick." If

you've ever been homesick you understand that kid's response. Sometimes folks eat or drink until they are as "sick as a dog." (I would like to know more about the dog.) Then there are folks who are, as they say, "just sick and tired." One minister reportedly left his church for health reasons: The church was "sick and tired" of him and he was "sick and tired" of them. People get sick looks, call in sick, take sick leave and collect sick pay and the company gets sick at heart. We get sick of school, sick of work, listen to sick jokes and laugh at sick humor because we live in a sick society. Wall Street is so sick that it is hemorrhaging. The economy is so sick it is in the death throes. And if I hear one more politician mention "kicking the can down the road" I am going to upchuck before I can reach the bathroom. No wonder a lot of politicians can't walk straight; they have hurt themselves kicking those cans. Now that I have you the reader, ready to check into the hospital let me tell you there is a great physician that is able to heal this sin-sickness that we love so dearly. (PLEASE READ ISAIAH chapter 1, verses 1-20. Please read, I beg you.) In this preacher's opinion we are in the exact same position as Judah was when Isaiah gave this message from God to his people. We, like Judah, have a sin-sickness that is going to lead to the death of our nation unless we call upon the Great Physician for forgiveness and healing. Do you remember Job's so called friends who supposedly came to comfort him? What they actually did was add to his grief and he labeled them as physicians of no value. America has a lot of physicians of no value who do nothing but add to our grief. We have one Great Physician. He is Jesus Christ, The Lord! Do we really want to be healed? We must call upon Him!

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the Towns
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"...It is the eternal struggle
between these
two principles
---right and wrong---
throughout the world..."

---Abraham Lincoln

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Elected Officials

Elected Officials

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