

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY  
**OPINIONS & COMMENTARY**

### Letters to The Editor

#### Thank you

The family of Lue McNabb would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who supported our family during this difficult time with the loss of our dear mother and grandmother. For everyone who visited, the calls, food, cards, flowers, money, and especially prayers that went up. We love and appreciate each and every one of you. May God Bless you all!

With Love  
Debra Garrett & Family  
Tarra Eller & Family  
Bobby McNabb & Family  
Terry Seabolt & Family

#### Thank you

Thank you from The Ridges. The Ridges Resort would like to thank all the participants of the 2009 Fall-a-bration and Trunk or Treat. The turnout was great and a good time was had by all. It was a sure sign of Fall with the costumed children going from vehicle to vehicle collecting candy, enjoying the warm and gooey s'mores, sitting wide eyed on the exhilarating boat tours, and giggling on the hay rides. The FFA barbecue tent was a flurry of activity which helped to raise much needed support for our local chapter. The cornhole competitions, while fun, also allowed the contribution of both food and cash to the Food Pantry of Towns County.

Thank you to all those who worked to make this year's festival such a success.

The Ridges Resort

### Extension Tips



by  
**Robert Brewer**

#### Lady beetles: friend or foe?

It's that time again, the lady beetles are back.

Native and exotic species of lady beetles are some of our most successful predators and are highly beneficial. There are approximately 480 species in the family Coccinellidae in North America. Lady beetles are predators in both the immature and adult stages and devour their prey directly. Although lady beetles are not particularly picky about what they eat, they are most frequently found feeding on aphids, mealybugs, scale insects, mites and other soft bodied insects.

For more than 100 years, scientists have searched for exotic species of lady beetles to introduce into the United States for the control of specific pest insects. Six species of exotic lady beetles are now established in the eastern United States including the seven-spotted lady beetle (*Coccinella septempunctata*), the multicolored Asian beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*) and *Coccinella undecimpunctata*, *Propylea quatuordecimpunctata*, *Hippodamia variegata*, and *Harmonia quadripunctata*. Where present, these species are welcome residents as they suppress pests in a wide range of plants including vegetables, apples, cotton corn, pecan, cereal crops, wheat, tobacco, pine trees and ornamental plants.

Despite the obvious benefits of lady beetles, some people consider them pests. As winter approaches, large aggregations of adult lady beetles (particularly *Harmonia axyridis*) can be found on outside windows, doors, walls and porch decks looking for a suitable overwintering site. They are particularly attracted to light-colored structures with sunny southwest exposures. On occasion, the beetles attempt to overwinter indoors. As temperatures warm in the spring, the overwintering beetles become active again, leave their overwintering sites and disperse to find food. During these periods of aggregation and dispersal, people often complain that the beetles become a serious nuisance pest. Remember that lady beetles do not

bite, sting or carry human diseases. Nor, do they feed on wood, clothing or human food or reproduce inside the home.

#### Control measures

Prevent entry of lady beetles into houses, storage buildings, attics and other structures by sealing up cracks and crevices in these structures. Use a good quality silicone or silicone-latex caulk to seal cracks and crevices around windows, doors, siding, utility pipes and other openings. Replace or repair damaged door and window screens. Install insect screening (20 mesh maximum) over attic and exhaust vents to prevent their entry.

Remove lady beetles inside the home with a broom and dust pan or the vacuum cleaner with the crevice tool attachment. A trap for ridding houses and other structures of *Harmonia axyridis* lady beetles is under development and will soon be available for use. Research reports document capture of essentially 100 percent of all active beetles within a room or attic where the trap is operated. Release captured beetles outdoors in sheltered areas.

Avoid killing beetles found indoors by spraying them with an insecticide or squashing them. Handling lady beetles or picking them off walls or furniture can stress the beetles. Stressed beetles secrete an orange substance from the joints in their legs that, though harmless, can stain walls and fabrics. In highly sensitive areas such as hospitals, health care facilities, food processing plants and electronic production facilities, invasions of lady beetles cannot be tolerated. Prevent entry into these areas through screening and caulking cracks and crevices. When beetles cannot be successfully excluded through screening and caulking, insecticides can be applied to provide temporary control. Products containing carbaryl (Sevin)™ or chlorpyrifos (Dursban)™ sprayed on to aggregations of beetles or applied to the harborage site will temporarily control beetles found on the outside of structures. Products containing pyrethrins may be used in addition to vacuuming to remove beetles found inside structures.

#### Lady beetle, friend or foe?

Once a person understands the beneficial aspects of these beetles, there is little doubt that the benefits far outweigh the nuisance aspect of their overwintering behavior.

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Walking is one of the healthiest things we can do for body, mind and spirit. Riding a bicycle also ranks high on our list of healthy activities. In the greener and leaner world of the future, both activities will be a logical choice for communities where people live closer to work and closer to distribution points of food and energy. Hundreds of millions of Indian and Chinese people have relied on walking and bicycling as their primary means of transportation for decades.

Yet here in the land of asphalt and automobiles, where good ideas are welcomed as long as they remain in virtual reality, bicycles and pedestrians are an anomaly on our paved streets, and on our winding mountain roads they are often an accident waiting to happen. Case in point; on a blind curve recently I saw a couple taking an evening stroll on the asphalt of the oncoming lane. The wide and grassy shoulder of the road was available, but they chose the pavement instead. When an oncoming vehicle approached they ignored the laws of physics, placing their faith instead in the laws of man and the good will of the driver. In other words they refused to step off of the asphalt and onto the shoulder, where they should have been walking in the first place by all that passes for common sense. The impatient driver of the approaching vehicle for his part, ignored the laws of man and the laws of physics as well and crossed over into my lane, placing his faith in my own good will and/or my ability to slow down quickly enough to avoid a collision. In this particular case I gave up my own position as center of the universe to allow these other more important, more entitled entities to proceed without having to alter their course or their schedule.

I think it is safe to say that many of you have witnessed the same or a very similar scenario. I have seen this one played out many times over the years, and it continues to baffle me, as does the

phenomenon of the highway jogger. I'm guessing that the goal of highway jogging is not to improve one's health, unless there are healthful benefits in breathing deep lung-fulls of car exhaust of which I am not aware. Perhaps there is some attraction in the jolt of adrenalin that comes

from being a moving target, but more likely in a culture where image is so important is the perceived benefit of being seen jogging.

Highway joggers usually disappear after a few days or weeks, but it seems we are stuck with the continuing legacy of slow moving Spandex which often impedes traffic on our winding mountain roads now long after the Tour de Georgia has come and gone. With narrow shoulders and very few bike lanes to accommodate bipedal transportation, Georgia has invited the world to bike the highways and byways of the Peach State and then save for a few "share the road" signs said, "Good luck - you're own your own!" As for the bike riders, they appear to subscribe to the same "safety in numbers" theory as African Wilda beasts who know that the lions will usually only pick off one or two stragglers.

Individually these minor annoyances are little more than that, but taken together they do not seem to bode well for a future of diminishing resources and belt tightening. We are a generation which refuses to alter our course or our schedule. Like the Imperial citizens of Rome, accustomed to receiving tribute from the rest of the world, we continue to act as if we are entitled, and anything that challenges that image is met with protest. Our arrogance in making this erroneous assumption is exceeded only by our arrogance with each other as we compete instead of cooperate; and as any member of a rush hour traffic jam can tell you, we often default to anger or violence if we do not get our way. And our leaders? They give us aspiring words, symbolic acts and unfunded mandates.

Arrogance is a challenge to the basic laws of the Universe and will always, in time, be humbled. Our culture of "My Space," and "me time" and it's fuzzy logic of entitlement which challenges the world by proclaiming that "The American way of life is not negotiable," is ill prepared for the future consequences of our past actions - and our present attitudes.

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### Questions and Answers

from the desk of

Commissioner Bill Kendall



Re: \$10,000 Homestead exemption for Towns County - Homeowners must apply for the increased exemption

Tuesday Nov. 4, 2009 Towns County voters in a modest 24% turnout overwhelmingly passed, by a vote of 1,806 YES (97.2%) to 52 NO (2.8%), to increase their homestead exemption from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

I want to thank everyone who had a part in making this legislation a reality which is now law. Towns County is now the only county of the 159 counties in the State to give homeowners a \$10,000 homestead exemption.

In 2007 Towns County citizens approved, by a large majority, tax legislation tied to Homestead Exemption that I had placed on the ballot which limits to 3% any annual increase of tax assessment that can be placed on their homes. This allows the assessment to be reduced, stay the same, but limits any increase to no more than 3%. Again making Towns County the only county in the State that has

this protection against sudden large tax assessment on their homes. This gives Realtors and the Towns County Real estate market a positive selling point for prospective home buyers looking to relocate in the North Georgia Mountains, as being the only county that grants these two tax protections on their home, along with levying the lowest total tax mills in the state. These tax advantages in Towns County not only protect the homeowner from high taxes on their home, it also will improve the value of their home by enhancing the home buyers market in Towns County, and will also have a positive impact for those with a home for sale and for the home construction industry and workers.

Q. Do I have to sign for this additional homestead exemption?

A. Yes - In order to receive the increased exemption, homeowners MUST apply by signing at the Tax Commissioners Office. Once you have signed, you do not have to sign again.

### 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@brmeme.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.*

# Community Calendar

**Towns County Water Board Meeting** 3rd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.  
**Towns County AARP Chapter 1859** meets the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 2 p.m. Luncheons are held at 1 p.m.  
**Towns County Democratic Party** meets at 5:30 every 2nd Thursday of the month at Crossroads Restaurant. Meeting begins at 6. Please call Julie Miller, (706) 896-6076.  
**Towns County Republican Party** meets the 1st Tuesday of each month from 5 p.m.-6 p.m. Dinner at Daniels Steak House, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. meeting, 896-7281.  
**Towns County Planning Commission** is held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Courthouse.  
**Towns County Commissioners** meeting is the 3rd Thursday at 5:30 p.m. in the courthouse.  
**School Board Meeting**, 2nd Monday each month at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.  
**Hiawassee City Council** 1st Tuesday of month 4 p.m., at City Hall.  
**Young Harris City Council**, 1st Tuesday of month at 7 p.m., Young Harris City Hall.  
**The Hiawassee River Valley Kennel Club** meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st Monday of each month at Brother's Restaurant on Hwy 64 in Murphy, NC. Call President Kit Miracle: 706 492 5253

or Peggy Moorman: 828 835 1082.  
**The Unicoy Masonic Lodge #259** meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.  
**Board of Voter Registrars** meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m., Courthouse.  
**Towns County Board of Elections** holds its monthly meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. at the Elections Office (Old Rock Jail).  
**Towns County Historical Society** meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 5 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 932, Hiawassee, GA 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org  
**Bridge Players** intermediate level meets at 12:45 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Health Dept. Call Eden at 706-896-6921.  
**Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG)** meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, located at 308 Big Sky Drive (behind the Holiday Inn), Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m. & the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Contact us by calling 706-896-0932, mtnregarts-craftsguild.org. mtnregarts-craftsguild@hotmail.com.  
**VFW Post #7807 Fish Fry** will be 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, 4:30-7 p.m., \$9 a plate, all you can eat.  
**Mountain Computer User Group** meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Goolsby

Center at YHC. Q & A at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.  
**FPL Retirees Breakfast** will meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Hole in the Wall Restaurant on the square in Blairsville at 9 a.m.  
**Chattahoochee-Nantahala Chapter, Trout Unlimiteda** meets 2nd Thursday of each month at Cadence Bank in Blairsville, 5 p.m. Fly Tying - 7 p.m. General Meeting. Everyone welcome. www.ngatu692.com.  
**Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)** meets the 3rd Monday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call John Quinlan at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridge-mountains.  
**Alcoholics Anonymous:** 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.  
**Mothers of Preschoolers** meets on the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church office at 706-745-2469 for more information.  
**Chatuge Regional Hospital Auxiliary** on the 3rd Monday of each month, except the months of July, October and December, in the hospital cafeteria at 1:30 p.m.  
**Old Fashioned Square Dance Lessons** each Mon. in Hiawassee, GA, 6 p.m. at the Senior Center (2 blocks south of the town square, beside the Courthouse) Hiawassee, GA 706-896-1060

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OFFICE LOCATED AT 446 NORTH MAIN STREET  
"THE MALL" HIAWASSEE (706) 896-4454  
Publication Number 635540. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points.

EMAIL Address: tcherald@brmeme.net

POSTMASTER: Send change of address to:  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD  
P.O. BOX 365 HIAWASSEE, GEORGIA 30546

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