

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY
OPINIONS & COMMENTARY



Christmas Blessings

By Senator Jim Butterworth

The Christmas Season is a celebration of the blessing we received from God in his only son Jesus Christ. This Christmas, let's remember to be thankful for the many blessings we have in our lives. These hard economic times seem to shine a light on what is most important because when we have less, we remember the true value of loving friends and family.

While there is no gift we can give that will equal God's child, our everyday actions can represent true Christian values. When complaining that work is hard and stressful, think about the many people who no longer have an office to complain about. Remember that success comes in counting blessings, not possessions. Give priceless gifts, like love and time, rather than gifts you buy and tie with a bow.

Think of those putting their lives on the line each day and those that made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedom. Our troops teach the value of democracy and freedom everyday. They build schools, provide food and aid to those without enough to support their families; meanwhile, their own families await their safe return. This Christmas, send them a letter to thank them. As a retired United States Air Force pilot, I know how much it means to have love and support everyday by those back home. If you see a family member

who will be missing a loved one this Christmas, say "thank you." Military families also make sacrifices.

This Christmas will be my daughter, Cate's, first Christmas. She is the newest addition and in turn, one of four great blessings my wife, Amy, and I are lucky to have in our lives. Everyday, it seems there is a new joy and another reason to be thankful. Amy and I look forward to teaching Cate and our other three children, Blake, Jack and Claire about the true meaning of Christmas. It is important for them to understand that while presents are a fun part of Christmas, the true gift came from God many thousands of years ago.

As Christmas gets closer, we should take this opportunity to teach others about the life and work of Jesus Christ. Don't stop with his birth, it is only part of the story. He did so many great things that we can learn from and use in our lives each day. We must be the example we want to see in our kids, our community, and our state.

As always, I am grateful to you, the 50th Senatorial district, for electing me to represent you. I look forward to serving you and the rest of Georgia as we move forward. Please feel free to contact me at 404.463.5257 or jim@jim-butterworth.com with your comments or concerns.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

I would like to take a moment this week to praise the hard work being performed by the detention officers at the Towns County Sheriff's Office. I have mentioned several times about the progress made and it has been mentioned by previous Grand Juries, as well by local service clubs including Rotary and Lions. Even though we are understaffed, detention officers have pulled together as a team and are working very hard to give you the best operation of a jail possible.

Last week I was contacted by Tonia Welch, training director for the Georgia Sheriffs' Association. Mrs. Welch informed me that Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) Council requires that the Georgia Sheriffs' Association assemble assessment teams to assess training. This is done as part of the requirement for the Sheriffs' Association maintaining an academy status with POST. Mrs. Welch called specifically to request that our own Jail Ad-

ministrator, Lieutenant Tully Griggs, be allowed to serve on the assessment team. Bill Hallsworth, who is responsible for jail services and court security for the Georgia Sheriffs' Association, recommended Lt. Griggs by name.

I feel it is a great honor that out of Georgia's 159 Sheriff's Offices, our Jail Administrator was chosen to serve on this assessment team. It is a testament to the professional standards being displayed by Lt. Griggs and the detention staff.

I also want to remind everyone of the benefit trap shoot I am hosting at the Chatuge Gun Club range on July 10, 2010. Fee to enter is \$50 per shooter or \$250 per five person team. There are still a few slots available but they are going quickly so if you would like to participate please contact me this week at (706) 896-4444. We will be raffling several prizes and anyone can come and participate in the raffles and you do not have to be present at the time of drawing to win. Please come out and enjoy the day with us. All the proceeds go directly to benefit the children of the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

For more information about the Towns County Sheriff's Office, to sign up for our monthly e-newsletter or to submit anonymous e-mail tips, please visit us online at www.townscountysheriffsoffice.com.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Many traditions reach across the centuries to join hands during the holidays, and in the great melting pot of the United States, diverse elements blend into a season which seems to extend now from Halloween to the twelfth day of Christmas. The celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the spiritual and historical remembrance of Hanukkah and even the cultural heritage of Kwanzaa are layered onto an observance of the Winter Solstice that is as old as humanity's ability to track the movement of the sun across the sky.

Western civilization derives largely from the cultures of the northern hemisphere and the northernmost countries of that region, and while the events which Christmas and Hanukkah commemorate occurred in places which rarely see snow, it is the traditions of snow and ice which have captured the imagination of many who decorate trees with icicles and hang stockings by imaginary chimneys. Santa Clause, elves and reindeer live at the North Pole, and as Christmas approaches we play "White Christmas" and songs about sleigh bells.

In keeping with our northern roots, December 21st marks the Winter Solstice and the shortest day of the year as the sun commences its long journey back to summer. Generations of northern Europeans in the misty centuries before our linear reckoning of time and history had cause for celebration as the earth turned once again towards light and warmth. Inside each of us is the descendant of a villager or member of a clan or tribe, many of which would gather together for warmth and companionship during the dark months of the year. As the holidays approach we still feel drawn back to home and hearth as we brave crowds and fight traffic to spend even a few hours with family and friends.

For others, Christmas and the holidays can be a time of stress or sadness. The passage of time is most apparent during this season as we mark the empty seats around the table. The solitary members of our community, the elderly, the homeless and those who are prevented from gathering with loved ones by distance or circumstance feel their separation now as no other time of the

year. Many recognize this and take the opportunity to reach out with generosity and compassion unequaled throughout the rest of the year.

Others who are not satisfied to keep Christmas in their own way - or not to keep it - feel compelled to rant or preach at the rest of us about how we should or should not observe the holidays. Many lament what they see as the commercialization of the remembrance of the birth of Christ. Others resent any spiritual implications of the holiday whatsoever. But to those who concern themselves with the beliefs and choices of others, I would say this: We need the holidays. We need every tradition and every positive expression that people can make for this time of celebration and remembrance, whether that expression be midnight mass, lighting a menorah or drums around a bonfire. We need the music and the lights, the mistletoe and holly, the church services and the time off from school and work. We even need the "commercialization" to which many attribute the impulse to give that is often the one thing which keeps many businesses open and providing jobs for another year.

We need these things because humans need celebrations to look forward to and ceremonies to serve as milestones of our passage through time. In a culture that produces traffic jams, overtime and stress related diseases we need positive reminders of the reasons we make those sacrifices. We need positive reinforcement of home and hearth and community and village. Before the separation of asphalt miles and gigantic congested hives of urban activity, and beyond these things, we are all still primarily members of families, clans and tribes. Therein is our strength and our hope for the future, and the holidays help renew those vital bonds.

My own tradition is Christmas, and I wish you all a merry one, and to all who keep the holidays in myriad other ways, I wish you all good health, good fortune and good cheer.

Have something to sell? Let the Herald work for you! 706-896-4454

Extension Tips



by Robert Brewer

Composting coffee grounds

It seems that coffee shops are on every corner these days and home consumption of coffee is up too. 56% of American adults drink coffee. What's that got to do with gardening? One word - grounds. You can reduce solid waste and help your yard and garden at the same time.

Grounds left over from coffee brewing could be just the ticket to great compost. In the fall and winter months many gardeners have less green or high nitrogen material available for composting along with an increased amount of high-carbon low-nitrogen materials. This can slow the decomposition process.

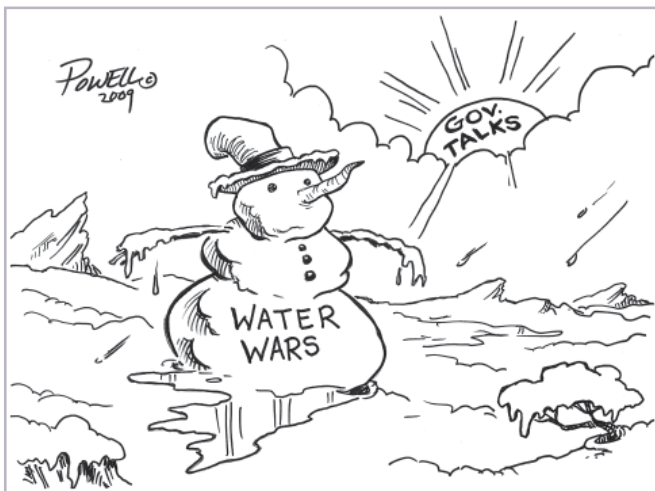
Coffee grounds have a carbon-to-nitrogen ration of 20:1, roughly equivalent to that of grass clippings. And, after brewing coffee grounds contain up to 2% nitrogen. For composting

purposes, consider green grounds "green" material similar to grass clippings. Fallen leaves have about a 35 to 85:1 ratio of carbon to nitrogen. Use one part green material (coffee grounds alone or mixed with grass clippings) to two parts leaves, or four parts green material to one part sawdust. Coffee grounds generate heat and will speed up the composting process.

Many coffeehouses, including national chains like Starbucks, will be happy to give you their used grounds. You can compost paper filters too. To reduce fruit fly infestations, keep grounds in a covered container and be sure to cover them in the compost pile.

Carbon: Nitrogen Ratios of Waste Materials

- Food waste 15:1
- Leaves 60:1
- Wood 700:1
- Fruit waste 35:1
- Sawdust 500:1
- Rotted manure 20:1
- Straw 80:1
- Cornstalks 60:1
- Grass clippings 19:1
- Alfalfa hay 12:1
- Coffee 20:1
- Pine needles 60-110:1
- Peat moss 58:1
- Newspaper 50-200:1



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@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.

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 6:30 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 Hiwassee 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 Holiday in the Wall

Restaurant on the square in Blairsville at 9 a.m.
Chattahoochee-Nantahala Chapter, Trout Unlimited 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
Mountain Magic Table Tennis Club meets every Monday at 6 p.m. at Pine Log Baptist Church in Brasstown, NC on Pine Log Rd. (in reception hall.) For more info call Lee at 828-389-0924

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