

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Letters to The Editor

### Letter to the Editor:

The one page ad published Jan. 22nd in the Herald paid and submitted by 60 Plus Org. suggests trial lawyers may be influencing State Representatives. Feb. 5th Mr. Spears stated the ad was full of lies and half truths. He further stated our Rep. had done good things for Towns County. Thank you for publishing my opinion Feb. 12th which was replied to by Spears Feb. 19th. I will address both letters from Spears.

I read all campaign contributions to our Reps. I could find and concluded there was enough evidence to justify submitting the ad. All of the lawmakers I checked on were accepting huge contributions from trial lawyers, other lawyers, Lawmakers and big businesses from all over the state and the US. Considering the state of our state laws it appears that the system works and someone is getting results by influencing Lawmakers. I asked readers to check the campaign reports and judge for themselves.

Obama the trial lawyer. Our Rep. the conservative. He is supposed to spend your taxes on good things and not on perks like insurance for himself nor on special interest groups.

Time for more changes.

A. J. Moore



### RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

This column may make you angry. Or frightened. Please read it anyway; we have to talk. Here's the deal: In young children, overexposure to technologies such as cell phones, tablets, and television has been shown to be related to attention deficit, impaired learning, increased impulsivity, and the ability to self-regulate (i.e. tantrums).

Did you know: One in three of our children now enters school developmentally delayed, negatively impacting their ability to begin reading and other academic achievement. Research shows unequivocally that the use of technology under the age of 12 years is detrimental to child development and learning.

Did you know: There is a direct correlation between TV and video game use and obesity. Thirty percent of America's kids are obese and a third of our obese kids will develop diabetes which will shorten their lives. Largely due to obesity, 21st century American children may be the first generation in history who do not outlive their parents.

Did you know: Seventy-five percent of our kids have a TV in their room, and for the majority of them, their sleep patterns are therefore disturbed. In a recent Boston College study, three fourths of 9-and-10 year olds are sleep-deprived to the extent that their grades are negatively

affected.

Did you know: Technology overuse is implicated as a factor in rising rates of childhood depression, anxiety, attachment disorder, attention deficit, autism, bipolar disorder, psychosis and problematic behavior. According to recent studies, one of every eleven children ages 8-18 is clinically addicted to technology.

Did you know: In December 2013, Dr. Anthony Miller, University of Toronto School of Public Health, recommended that based on new research, radio emission exposure (such as that from cell phones and other wireless devices) should be reclassified as 2A, that is, "probably carcinogenic."

This thing snuck up on us like the lobster in the pot of water on the stove that didn't feel the heat until it was too late to escape. At first it was a bit of a novelty. Then it became a convenience, then a necessity. Now it seems more like an obsession. We're so awed with what it can do we almost forgot to ask if there are some downsides. There are. They are huge. They are nation-changers. I urge you to talk about it with other parents. Go to resources like: [www.zonein.ca](http://www.zonein.ca), then have some discussions in your neighborhood, school, church. This is too urgent to ignore.

Send your parenting questions to: [DrDon@RareKids.net](mailto:DrDon@RareKids.net).

## The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Once upon a time, people were bound by honor to speak the truth and to always keep their word.

This sounds like the beginning of a fairy tale because even an elementary school knowledge of history challenges the notion that humans once lived in a golden age of integrity. Every major religion tells the story of a struggle between good and evil as old as Time.

Nevertheless, even those of us inured to the big lies in Washington and the little disclaimers in the fine print are beginning to wonder where, in this age of relativism, the truth lies.

Relativism is a collection of philosophical views which holds that truth is relative to culture, language or biology. Simply put, relativism states that there is no absolute right or wrong and that good and evil are artificial creations that depend on perspective.

My own favorite example of relativism is the infamous grand jury testimony of President Bill Clinton during his impeachment hearings which, in his view, depended on the definition of the word, "is." A less sophisticated observer of the events surrounding Clinton's impeachment might conclude that the president lied, but political (and magical) thinking spins a different story.

The use of this example in a discussion of integrity is not an indication of any political preference. Examples of bold faced lies are fairly easy to find in the utterances of almost every president, republican or democrat, in living memory. (I say "almost," because I cannot think of a single example of a presidential lie during the administration of Jimmy Carter.) The Clinton example, however, seems to have been a watershed event in our nation's views on what the word "sex" means. Young (and ever younger) people are doing what young people have always done, having fun and spreading STDs, but now without the social stigma of having "sex."

Let's shift gears now in our discussion of truth and integrity. The inspiration for this discussion actually came from some conversations I have had lately on a topic a little closer to home that these national and generational concerns, conversations centered on a concept closely related to truth and integrity - the concept of work ethic.

Perhaps it was the failure of yet another cheaply made Chinese product that began this thought process. Maybe it was being served raw fish, and I'm not talking about sushi, three different times in three local restaurants. Maybe it was the loose lugs after a tire rotation, or the resentful clerk on a personal call while taking my money, or my ability to become invisible to customer service when I need help finding an item in a store. There are many more examples of the failure of

work ethic that come to mind, and they are echoed and enhanced by stories I hear from other people who are experiencing the same failure.

Last year we had an electrician doing a small job at home. He arrived two hours late one Monday and worked about an hour in our attic. Just before lunch, with wires hanging down from the ceiling, he descended the ladder and said, "Will anyone be home Wednesday or Thursday? I should be back to finish the job by then."

This year the first electrician we called did not call us back. (I don't mean to pick on electricians because there are several fine ones in our area.) A roofing company did not return our calls. A surveyor has not returned two calls. A carpenter has not returned two calls. My insurance company took two weeks to call us back.

The failure to follow up is a new phenomenon in my experience of our area. During the height of the construction boom several years ago, it was not unusual to have to wait for a job to be scheduled, but vendors always called back the same day in an effort to keep or to gain a client.

I do not know exactly what has changed for us in just one decade, or how to prove a link between relativism and the apparent decline in work ethic that prevents us from being able to purchase an appliance that does not fail or a hamburger cooked properly. My own unscientific questioning has yielded some responses to the tune of "I'm only making minimum wage - why should I work any harder?" But that does not explain why a craftsman or skilled laborer making much more would be willing to lose a customer over a simple phone call.

If we were talking about a single individual rather than an array of professions and services, one might simply say that Mr. Economy is suffering from depression - not the economic definition, but the general malaise that sometimes prevents one from wanting to get out of bed. Perhaps after years of struggle there are individuals, or entire segments of the economy, that are suffering from a form of acquired helplessness syndrome.

From my own personal experience, all I can say with certainty is that, once upon a time, even when we worked for minimum wage or less, work ethic required effort and accountability. Our word was our reputation, and that was more valuable than any short term gain or loss. Reputation was something to be carefully maintained and built upon, because we were hopeful for the future. Maybe that, then, is the difference. Perhaps today there is less work ethic in the world because there is less hope, and there is less hope because we have no truth to guide us.



### "IT'S ON MY MIND.."

Danny H. Parris

#### Where do you fit?

During the last 53 years I have served several Baptist churches. The first church I served as a bivocational pastor. In the next church I was a student pastor and the third was a seminary pastorate. These were relatively short pastorates and smaller churches. The fourth church I pastored was right out of seminary. It was a rather short pastorate in South Georgia. It was short mainly because I never learned to blow gnats and walk on sand. From 1975 to 2004 when I retired I served two churches. Since 2004 I have been blest to serve as interim for four churches. In all of these churches my experience has been one of great joy. It has been a tremendous privilege to meet godly men and women. My life and ministry has been blessed by the prayers and stayers. Those who encouraged, loved, forgave, and held me up. At the same time I have encountered those who made me sad. In every church I have served there is a category of people that I refer to as poppers. They "pop in", "pop off", and then "pop out." You just never know where they will "pop up" next. They are sporadic. They are like popcorn. If you can't put a lid over them they get scattered to the four winds. There is a second

group that I call the hoppers. These individuals are very restless. They have difficulty making and maintaining long-term commitments. They get bored very easily. If things are not "hopping" around them, they start "hopping." They "hop over" to the next church where things are more exciting or the fire seems to be the brightest. There is another category that I call the knockers. They are habitually complaining and criticizing. They knock the preacher, the program and the pew. Nothing is ever good enough. They don't ever offer solutions, they just knock. Occasionally I have met the stoppers. Their mission is to see that nothing ever changes. Any kind of progress is bad. The stoppers may slow things down, but they are the only thing that stops. Everything else just goes on without them. Then there are the parkers.

They park beside some experience and never go on to perfection. It may have been a good experience like Peter, who on the Mount of Transfiguration wanted to build three tabernacles and "can" the experience. Sometimes people park by tragic experiences and stop living. Lastly, there is a growing number of shoppers. They are shopping for the perfect church. They want the best and most from their relationship. Most shoppers want to be ministered to, rather than say, "I am looking for a place to minister" (II Timothy 4:7). Make sure that you are a prayer and a stay.

### Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!

Contact us at 706-896-4454

Deadline for the T.C. Herald is Friday by 5 PM



## Community Calendar

### 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:

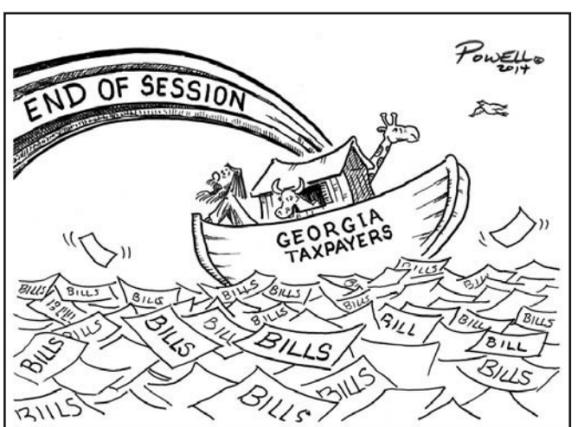
Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Our email address: [tcherald@windstream.net](mailto:tcherald@windstream.net). Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to 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.

**American Legion Post 23** meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 4 PM at VFW Post 7807, Sunnyside Rd., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-8387 for details. We need your support!  
**Towns County Water Board Meeting** 3rd Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.  
**Mountain Community Seniors** meet the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 1 p.m.  
**Towns County Democratic Party** meets the 2nd Thursday of every month at 5 PM at the Senior Center.  
**Towns County Republican Party** meets at 6:30 PM the 4th Thursday of each month at the new Senior Center. For more info call 706-994-3919.  
**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 in Murphy. Call Kit: 706-492-5253 or Peggy: 828-835-1082.  
**The Unicoy Masonic Lodge #259** meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.  
**Stephens Lodge #414 F & AM** meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in Young Harris.  
**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 5:30 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 1182, Hiawassee, GA. We do oral family histories

of residents. 706-896-1060, [www.townshistory.org](http://www.townshistory.org)  
**Bridge Players** intermediate level meets at 12:30 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Rec Center.  
**Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG)** meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m., meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Call us by 706-896-0932 or [mtnregarts-craftsguild.org](http://mtnregarts-craftsguild.org).  
**Mountain Computer User Group** meets the 2nd Monday of each month in Young Harris. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. A "Q & A" session follows. Details can be found at [www.mcug.org](http://www.mcug.org).  
**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 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](http://www.ngatu692.com).  
**Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)** meets the 3rd Monday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call John at 706-896-2430 or visit [www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridge-mountains](http://www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridge-mountains).  
**Alcoholics Anonymous:** 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.  
**Mothers of Preschoolers** meets the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church at 706-745-2469.  
**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.  
**Mountain Magic Table Tennis Club** meets 3 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Jerry (828) 837-7658.  
**The Humane Society Mountain Shelter** Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at Cadence Bank in Blairsville.

**The Towns County Alzheimer's Support Group** meets the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM in the Family Life Center of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church. For more info call Carol at 706-896-6407.  
**The Appalachian Shrine Club** meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Allegheny Lodge in Blairsville. For more info call William 706-994-6177.  
**Georgia Mountain Writers Club** meets at Cadence Bank the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 AM.  
**GMREC Garden Tours** every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.  
**Shooting Creek Basket Weavers** meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For more info [www.shootingcreek-basketweavers.com](http://www.shootingcreek-basketweavers.com).  
**Friendship Community Club** meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6 PM at Clubhouse, 1625 Hwy. 76, 706-896-3637.  
**Goldwing Road Riders** meets the 3rd Saturday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse in Hiawassee. We eat at 11 and meeting begins at 12.  
**Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** meets every Wednesday evenings at 7 PM at the Red Cross building (up the hill from the chamber office on Jack Dayton Circle).  
**Caregiver support group** meets 2nd Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m. at Brasstown Manor, located at 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-4285 for more info.  
**Enchanted Valley Square Dance Club.** Dances 2nd & 4th Fridays at Towns Co. Rec. Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch.  
**Brasstown Woodturners Guild** meets 1st Saturday of month at 9:30 AM in HHS shop. For more info call J. C. at 706-896-5711.  
**VFW Post #7807** will be hosting a fish fry they 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month April - October. \$9. all you can eat from 4:30 - 7 PM.  
**Mountain Amateur Radio Club (MARC)** meets 6:30 PM the 1st Monday of month at 1298 Jack Dayton Cir. (next to EMS), Hiawassee. For info call Al 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.

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OFFICE LOCATED AT 518 N. MAIN ST. SUITE 7  
 "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@windstream.net](mailto:tcherald@windstream.net)

POSTMASTER: Send change of address to:  
 TOWNS COUNTY HERALD  
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