

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:
This concerns my previous Letter To The Editor. We both went through some back and forth to get the job correctly and I can and do appreciate that. I was favorably impressed with Shawn Jarrard's "fair and balanced" reporting on the Waite's law suite. I would hope it will continue as the law suite progresses.

The point of my letter was how the City Council is conducting business incorrectly. Her refusal to vote is of no consequence as she and the rest of the Council proceeded to sell the old city hall in a manner that is against the state law. The City Charter is not the supreme law in this case. state law is. The "rule" is called Sovereign Rule or Sovereign Authority. It means the higher rule or authority takes precedence over a lesser rule or law.

There are very valid reasons why those laws are on the books. They are there to protect the taxpayers. The City Council is there to protect and serve the taxpayers.

All the articles concerning the City Council all have been very positive. That could very well be only half of the story. I would suggest a full set of GMA manuals for your staff for reference information. I have a question for you to illustrate the half story comment. At the end of almost all City Council meetings they go into "Executive Session for Briefing on Threatened Litigation." That is a lot of litigation for a properly run organization, don't you think?

Please call if you have any questions.

John L. Holmes

Dear Editor,

I just want to give my sincere thanks, to Chatuge Regional Hospital during the recent Health Fair.

I was so glad there was someone in the lab to do my blood work for me, since I have to be reclined due to issues beyond my control. No I am not afraid of the needles or to have it done, I just need to recline or lay flat down on my back or I will over heat and get sweaty and shaky and pass out! I always tell them this and I am so glad some one is always handy for the lab since they have no place for it upstairs, which they may need to consider upstairs for future visits for patients like me. LOL! But aside from that I want to thank my family for encouraging me to go have the EKG and all done. Had it not been for them keeping on at me, I would not have known there was a slight problem there, although I do know about my murmur. But I want to thank sincerely, every one in the ER, as well as the attending physician, who helped with the readings and discharge.

I also want to say the hospital is so lovely after the remodeling. The ER rooms are much better and private now than before.

Lastly, I just want to reach out to all for the generosity that was taken as well as hospitality and kindness during the time I was there.

*Blessings to you all!
Mrs. D. Barnes*



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

If you have to cheat to win, are you a winner? You might ask Tom Brady that question. I have a hunch he may have lain awake a few nights recently, looking up at the ceiling, asking it himself. Wherever the story of Super Bowl 49 is told someone will raise the question, "Oh, isn't that the game where Tom Brady...?"

I know, the subject of integrity isn't one that generally gets your heart racing. Seems almost like carryover from an earlier generation. But integrity is the cornerstone of civilization. I mean, if you can't trust your spouse, how can there ever be joy? If you can't trust your doctor, your broker, your neighbor, your president, your employer, your sergeant, then your world becomes suddenly unstable.

In a simpler time a person's word was their bond. Before the era of contracts requiring nine pages of fine print, two people shook hands and the deal was done. When trust goes away, when integrity deteriorates, then something irreplaceable seeps out of the culture. Suddenly you can't believe the news. Suddenly the whole world takes on a tabloid tinge.

When I was in junior high a teacher whose name I don't even remember taught

me a lesson I'll never forget. Two of our classmates were arrested for allegedly setting fire to an abandoned house. Unfortunately, they had a reputation as guys who were frequently up to some kind of no good. One of our teachers told the class, "Always live so that if someone starts a rumor about you, no one will believe it."

So what if, when De-flate-gate broke after Super Bowl 49, folks who got the news said, "I'll bet that's not true. I've watched Brady ever since he was a kid and I know him to be squeaky clean. He would never do something like that?" What if a merchant had come forward and said, "When he was in high school I accidentally overpaid him a dollar in change and when he found out, he walked clear back to my store to give it back."

What if a teacher stood to say, "I knew Tommy when he was in 5th grade, and he was the most honest kid in my room." What if a girl would rise and say, "I dated Tom for two years in college and he is the most perfect example I know of a trustworthy gentleman."

Ask Brady; in an honest moment I'll bet he'll tell you, "If you have to cheat to win, you're not a winner." Make sure your kids know.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

The Trans-Pacific Partnership, or "TPP," is a proposed treaty concerning trade regulations and investments between the United States and 12 countries in the Asia Pacific region, including Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. The stated purpose of the proposed treaty, according to the sponsors, is to "enhance trade and investment among the TPP partner countries, to promote innovation, economic growth and development, and to support the creation and retention of jobs."

Sounds good. Who could object? America certainly needs jobs, and with China increasingly willing to flex its economic muscle in the region and around the world, a strategic economic partnership in the Pacific could be very important.

So important, in fact, that the Obama Administration, with a group of strange political bedfellows in several Senate republicans, has been pushing for "Fast Track Authority" to allow the White House to negotiate and sign treaties without Congressional oversight. If Fast Track Authority is approved, Congress would not be able to object to individual components of the treaty, and would only be able to vote "yes" or "no" on the entire agreement.

Fast track authority is nothing new. The practice has been around for at least 80 years. However, the extreme secrecy surrounding the proposed treaty has inspired a broad coalition of people, including many prominent members of the President's own party, to object. Very few people outside the inner circles of the governments involved in negotiating have read any of the actual text of the treaty. Mr. Obama has taken the additional precaution of classifying much of the proceedings around the treaty.

Members of Congress who wish to read the text are taken to a secured room in the basement of the Capitol Visitor Center where they must give up their cell phones and staff. They are not allowed to make notes. They are not allowed to discuss anything they read.

What we do know about the treaty has been leaked, and what has been leaked is cause for concern. Buried deep within the pages of the treaty are provisions that would cheer the heart of any oligarch.

Big media has long feared and loathed the unrestricted freedom of the World Wide Web and has sought ways to control this last frontier of free enterprise. Media is understandably concerned about "intellectual property" and the ability of foreign states to "steal" information, software and entertainment, but their preferred solution to the problem is extremely restrictive copyright provisions and internet controls, both of which can be found in the

language of the treaty.

Also buried within the proposed treaty are provisions that many fear would erode the very sovereignty of its signers. The treaty would give foreign corporations the right to sue a member government, in private tribunals independent of the international justice system, for compensation if the laws of that nation negatively impacted their profits - or expected profits. A coal company, for example, could sue for compensation if a member state passed environmental laws that resulted in a reduction of coal burning.

I have long believed that President Obama, contrary to the opinion of many on the right, is not a "communist," a "socialist" or even a "Kenyan." I believe he can accurately be described as a corporatist with an allegiance to the interests of international business - not unlike past presidents and future candidates for the office. I am deeply concerned, but not surprised, that he must work closely with the republican leadership in order to successfully negotiate the Trans Pacific Partnership.

Supporters of the treaty, including the President, seem to believe that there is much to be gained here in support of our economic and strategic interests. However, if past experience is any guide, "our interests" can be interpreted to mean the profit margins and stock prices of large multinational corporations. Congress and its revolving door network of lobbyists has a long history of inserting "Trojan horse" provisions into the laws of the land, and those who challenge the TPP have also found, in addition to the questions already raised, language that would seem to open the door to a dismantling of restrictions placed on Wall Street since the financial crisis of 2008.

The oligarchs, for their part, grow impatient with the incompetence and inefficiency of governments, especially those that are shackled to the corpse of democracy. They would prefer to do business with no government interference at all, or, barring that, to be able to continue to influence government to create laws that favor their own vested interests. Those of us who seek a middle path do not believe that "crony capitalism" is the ideal compromise between a soviet style planned economy and no government oversight at all.

Undoubtedly there is merit in the idea of a trade agreement structured to support the stated goals of the TPP. However, many of us have come to expect that our elected officials of both parties will unfailingly promote the interests of their corporate donors over the interests of the voters. We should support the challengers of the TPP, regardless of their party affiliation or philosophy, in their efforts to shine some light into these secret proceedings.

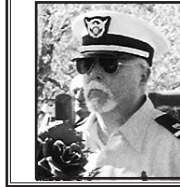
GUEST COLUMNS

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.



The Veterans' Corner

By Scott Drummond, USCG Veteran

United States Army Air Corps/United States Air Force: Jim Coker

Jim made a point to advise me that he wanted this article published before Memorial Day to include honoring approximately 405,000 men (and women) who gave their lives for ALL of us, our beloved USA during World War II. I cannot begin to portray the history of our Army Air Corps, its transition into our United States Air Force, our nation's security provided by our air power, nor those patriotic men and women who gave so much of themselves, and those who gave their lives serving our primary aerial military service. I can only try to introduce you to one such man, Mr. Jim Coker, a fine kind, easy going soul who served in many combat missions, and saw many of his beloved comrades make the ultimate sacrifice for each other and our USA.

Jim enlisted in the AAC while a high school senior, 1942. Training for Jim was Maxwell Field, Montgomery, AL; Decatur, AL; then NAV School, Pasadena, TX; (2nd Lieutenant); Sioux City, IA for assignment to new B-17 bomber; then flew 700 miles to Bangor, ME and proceeded 2000 miles over the Atlantic to Prestwick, Scotland. He and his crew were assigned to the 3rd Bomb Division, from England made many highly dangerous and perilous 8 and 10 hour flights deep into Germany. Understand that these missions were absolutely critical to defeating the NAZI war machine. A typical five day combat assignment followed by

three days off for R and R in London was business as usual for these patriots, who knew any day could be their last on earth. One mission into Frankfurt resulted in a controlled 125 MPH crash landing at "Lame Duck Field" with landing gear, hydraulics (no flaps), and oxygen all knocked out. Very scary! Jim noted that his group lost 15 out of 33 bombers and 69 precious lives. Enemy fighters and anti-aircraft fire took a toll on our flying heroes.

Jim flew missions out of Poltava, Russia; Teheran, Iran; Cairo, Egypt; Marrakech, Africa; Casablanca, all the while enduring a 17% survival rate. He became a member of the "Lucky B Club". (Use your imagination.)

Jim later went to work for TWA Airlines as an aeronautical maintenance engineer, before being recalled to serve, once again, our 8th USAF during the Korean War in 1953, for 3 1/2 years. Flew aboard our B29 and B-45 long range aircraft before Honorable Discharge as Captain. Jim is now permanently settled in our Bald Mountain Park and is active in our VFW Post #7807 in Hiawassee.

"Lady Godiva" was Jim's Flying Fortress B17 and was rebuilt two more times after being severely damaged by Germans, one of which resulted in Jim losing his co-pilot, engineer, and two other officers.

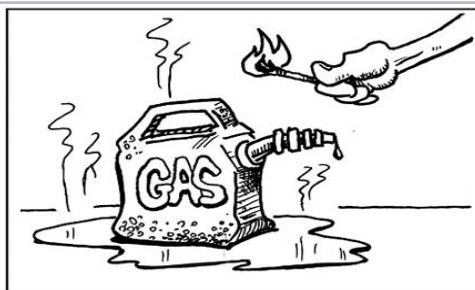
Memorial Day, May 25th is to humbly honor all those many who gave their lives for you, me, and America. Please attend our service at eleven AM, Veterans Park. Jim will be there.

Semper Paratus

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U.S. Congressman Doug Collins, 9th District, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-9893
Rep. Stephen Allison, Georgia House of Representatives, 404-656-0177 or 0185
Sen. John Wilkinson, Georgia State Senate, 404-463-5257
Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall, 706-896-2276
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Magistrate/Probate Judge David Rogers, 706-896-3467
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