

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

When schools are not in session, children often spend more time on the computer or in front of the television. Make sure your computer has an Internet filter (available from many family-oriented websites), and that you have activated the parental controls on your television. Teach your child never to give out their name, address, or other identifying information to anyone on the Internet. Make an effort to become acquainted with the parents of your children's friends. Don't be afraid to ask them what their guidelines are for their child's Internet and television use.

Set outdoor boundaries for your child. A good way to establish these limits is to take a tour of the neighborhood with your child and determine what areas are off limits. Perhaps you live near highway or a busy intersection, that might be designated "out of bounds" because of the risks they present to your child. Often places with water, such as creeks, streams and ponds are also out of bounds. Entering unfamiliar homes without a parent should always be out of bounds. Discuss these boundaries with your child and make sure they understand.

Get to know your child's camp counselors, coaches, troop leaders, ministers and teachers.

When you speak to the adults in your child's life, establish yourself as "Mary's dad" or "Jimmy's mom." If time allows, offer to volunteer or help out in some capacity. Not only will you enjoy the time you spend engaged with your child in summer activities, but you can watch their interaction with others and monitor their activities.

Summer safety tips

Summertime is a season that many families spend time enjoying outdoor activities such as swimming, boating and outdoor sporting activities. We, at your Sheriff's Office want you to remain safe as you enjoy time with family outdoors. In the interest of helping you remain safe we offer the following summer safety guidelines:

Never allow a child to swim unsupervised. If your child is going with a friend to swim, be sure to speak with the adult in charge. Don't be afraid to ask if they know CPR. Children can drown quickly, and in very small amounts of water. Even a brief span of inattention can be fatal. Take the opportunity to evaluate your child's ability and general comfort in the water. Make sure your child knows the safety rules.

Hydration is important for all ages, particularly in the summer. A dehydrated person can become weak, faint and vulnerable. Make sure you allow at least eight glasses of water per day for each person, more if you're involved in athletic or strenuous activities. If you're traveling, freeze water in reusable containers to pack in a cooler. The ice will thaw gradually, but the water will stay cooler and more refreshing during the long, hot summer days.

The Arizona Wildfire Tragedy, can it happen here?

Can a wildfire such as the one going on in Arizona happen in Towns County? The answer is YES... and probably will one day, and if we are not all prepared, trained, and educated to the dangers, it can quickly turn into a tragedy like this recent Arizona wildfire where 19 of the elite, best, and most highly trained woodland "Hotshots" were quickly trapped by a wildfire and lost their lives. This out of control wildfire has also destroyed hundreds of homes, businesses, and property and at this time is only 8% contained...

...not good odds. I may sound like a broken record lately featuring wildfire education and prevention programs, but I think it's a good record to listen to. The old timers say we are overdue for a major fire in our surrounding forests and the wildfire experts say it's not "if", but "when" it will happen here, so we must get our heads out of the sand and plan for the "When" in order to minimize the loss of property and even life. Fires in Towns County have dropped by 75% since we started the Firewise program and I contribute that drop to our emphasis on the fire/safety education we have been preaching for several years. The program is simple and teaches us to be aware of fuel hazards around our homes and property and to do something about these hazards before the fire approaches and it's too late. Whether this drop can be directly attributed to Firewise or not we are all better off by joining a program such as this to help minimize the dangers around us. The video clip here shows a good example of "Firewise" preparation and how it saved the property...

...these people were prepared and avoided losing their home by planning ahead of the fire. <http://vimeo.com/68342641> Looking at aerial views of burned out subdivisions where most of the landscape is blackened and there are only a few intact houses untouched shows that these people whose homes were skipped had planned for the worst, minimized their risks, and when the fire approached, the firefighters were able to save their homes. It works, it's easy, it's inexpensive, and it's the best "insurance" you can get to save your home from a wildfire or a even a yard fire. Will it save all homes that are "Firewise"? No... Some of the burned homes were probably "Firewise", but the odds of saving your property are much better than if you do nothing. Towns County Fire Rescue is very well trained, but must continue to train its firefighters and to better equip firefighters for

Executive Director of RC&D



Frank Riley battling wildfires so we will be can all come home from a wildfire situation. There is no property worth the loss of any life and we are trained that the most important person on a fire scene is "Me" and we will not risk any "Me's" for any property. We salute those 19 lost "Hotshots", and may we learn something from your sacrifice and not let it happen again. For more information on the Firewise and wildfire safety contact Towns County Fire Rescue at 706-896-2090 or Georgia Forestry Commission at 706-781-2398.

Frank M. Riley, Jr, CF is Executive Director - Chestateel/Chattahoochee RC&D Council. For more information on the Chestateel/Chattahoochee RC&D Council, visit our web site www.chestateel-trcd.org - Phone 706- 894-1591 email susan.ccrd@gmail.com. NTJ0110Z19JCA

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

What are your fears?

To live a life of fear is to live a life of torment. Some people are afraid of living, but they are also afraid of dying. Did you know that for everything that exists in life, someone is afraid of it? People are afraid of rats, cats, dogs, snakes, spiders, crowds, speaking, flying, etc.

Chuck Swindoll tells the story of a young boy who was afraid of speaking. He was chosen to give the famous address of Patrick Henry to a large gathering of parents, students and teachers. He was scared half to death. His knees were vibrating, his mouth was dry, sweat was popping out on his face and his hands were clammy and cold. He began, (probably remembering a recent health class) "Give me liberty or give me death." And die he did.

Fear is a paralyzing force. It will freeze your feet, muzzle your mouth, hobble your hands and melt your mind. I enjoy talking with people who are afraid to fly in planes. I tell them what they really need to be afraid of is not flying, but crashing. Also, I never fail to warn them of the most deadly peril of flying which is airplane poison - one drop

will kill you! However, I hurriedly share with them two of the safest places on an airplane. The first is next to the black box, it always survives. The second place is to sit in the back of the plane. You have never heard of a plane backing into a mountain have you? Most people that I talk with about flying never fly with them. They always take the bus. I really don't mean to make light of fear. It is a problem that we all face at one time or other. Some people have to spend years in therapy and thousands of dollars to overcome some fear.

The root of fear is sin. It goes back to the garden when Adam and Eve sinned. When God came calling, Adam responded by saying, "I heard your voice." "I was afraid and I hid myself" (Genesis 3:10). The Psalmist said the remedy for fear is faith. He said, "What time I am afraid I will trust in thee" (Psalm 56:3). John said, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (I John 4:18). Isaiah emphasized the priceless possession of faith when he penned the words, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isaiah 26:3).

The next time fear knocks at your door let faith answer and fear will flee with a fast farewell.

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen



A few days ago Ruthie and I were at a picnic for about fifty teens, hosted at the home of a friend of ours. A big tent had been set up in the backyard so they could eat in the shade; the food was prepared and served from their beautiful deck. Nice.

When the kids started through the serving line, the dozen or so adults present were pressed into service to help keep them from dying of hunger. The mother of a 15-year old girl jumped to the task and to free her hands, handed her purse to her daughter. You would have thought the daughter had just been asked to change the oil in the family truck. She sighed deeply, rolled her eyes, grimaced, and looked at her friends with that "have you noticed how my mother imposes on me?" look.

I thought, What's going on here? Beautiful day. Beautiful setting. Scrumptious meal. She's with her friends. And the only thing that mars this idyllic setting is she is asked to hold her mother's purse for a few minutes... What am I missing here?

I have a dear friend, Janet, who is a professional parent coach. Recently she substituted as math teacher for a class of 8th grade honor students. Here is how she described the scene as the kids

entered the room:

"Children walk into the classroom rude, selfish and expecting to be served. They lack respect, for anyone and anything, sadly including themselves. They speak unkindly to adults and peers alike. They eat during class, feet on the desk, if not sitting on top of the desk. Students come without paper and pens and pencils, but they do come with iPhones, ear buds, make-up, food and drink.

"And attitude. Lots of attitude. These children walk into the room with a 'what are you going to do for me?' chip on their pampered shoulders. They talk constantly and are openly disgusted if asked to stop. They lie, they cheat, they steal. Without question they are the center of their worlds." (www.OurChildish-Ways.com)

Not all, of course. But many; maybe most. That's how kids act when a generation of parents have given them most everything they want and required little in return. That's how kids act when mom and dad think peace rather than character when providing guidance the kids don't think they need. Aren't you glad our kids are different?

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

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.



Community Calendar

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 2 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 Hiwassee 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

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.
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 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 at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains.
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.
Prostate Cancer Support Group meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 5-6 PM in the Cancer Treatment Center Auditorium in Blairsville. For more info call Steve 706-896-1064.
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 St. Francis of Assisi Church 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.
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 p.m. 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 Hiawassee Senior Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch. Call 706-379-2191.
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 the 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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