

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

This is good information for the folks needing to renew their driver's license.

I was warned that it takes a lot of ID so I took to the Blairsville Department of Driver's Services:

- 1) A certified copy of my birth certificate.
- 2) Copy of my marriage certificate.
- 3) Bank statement.
- 4) Water bill from Towns County.
- 5) Car registration
- 6) My current driver's license.

My birth certificate did not have a "raised, stamped seal".

I did not have my Social Security card. (A deputy told me to never carry it or my Medicare card.)

So I was issued a temporary license until I come back with more, better ID.

Please publish this information to save folks three or four trips and the possibility of losing their tempers.

If you have a valid driver's license in hand why can't that be enough?

Dorothy Handy

(Editor's Note: To obtain a complete list of requirements to renew your driver's license go to: www.dds.ga.gov and follow the links.)



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

When I was a freshman I went away to a boarding high school with about 200 other kids. It was a Christian school and as you might expect, there were lots of rules. For instance the girls and the boys were kept separate for the most part. The only exception was that we could eat together one meal each day. Actually, I think the meal thing was intended to try and teach the boys some manners. It helped with some; not all.

There were other rules, too. We had daily room inspection and if your room wasn't spotless they'd come get you and your roommate out of class so you could clean it up. There was zero tolerance on class tardiness and absence. Every student had to spend some time every day working - at the school farm, campus lawn care, janitor work, kitchen staff, boiler room, etc. Healthy environment for a teenager, actually.

One thing I didn't understand till later is that you could get in big trouble for violating a policy the faculty called Attitude. If a student demonstrated a rebellious spirit, was sassy, if they demonstrated a negative or critical attitude, it could develop into a major discipline issue. Eventually you might even be sent home.

I wondered about that at the time; I don't wonder any more. The faculty knew something the kids didn't know. A positive outlook is essential to good health, for instance. Also, those who have a positive attitude are more likely to invest energy in reaching their goals, are less inclined to give up. People with a positive outlook on average live seven to eight years longer, have fewer headaches and more friends. They are also able to handle stressful experiences more readily. Those are traits the faculty was attempting to develop in their students.

So, how do kids learn to be optimistic and positive? By watching. Nothing does more to promote an atmosphere of joy in a family than to live in an environment of gratitude and thankfulness. To God for His goodness. To other family members for the joy they create. To friends for the richness they bring. To a spouse for a good meal. To a youngster for laundry folded. To the dentist for a good visit. To the carry-out boy at the grocery store. Gratitude is a learned attitude. So, let's agree to be full-time model-ers - at Home University.

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

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

I have visited nursing homes most of my life. Four grandparents, two great-grandparents and a number of other friends and relatives all spent some amount of time in one of those long, lonely hallways that wait for us at the end of a lifetime in America. Our family traditions included visiting the sick and the infirm. These are traditions which are still well established in our mountain communities.

There is much that we can discuss regarding nursing homes. We can talk about the enormous expenses that await us in our final years or the cultural malaise that allows the factory farming of caregiving that, for most of human history, has been handled by families and in households. We can puzzle out the epidemic of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia today that place caregiving beyond the ability of so many families.

I've seen too many people set aside, out of sight, out of mind, when the unpleasantness and inconvenience of aging disturbed the self-absorbed routines of their younger family members. I've seen the endurance of endless days of boredom and loneliness, the unrelenting hours of discomfort relieved only by medication and fitful sleep; the brief, infrequent and uncomfortable visits by reluctant family members on major holidays. I've seen eyes reaching out in desperation beyond lips unable to speak; resignation and defeat in others longing for death to come and end the suffering.

Today I speak mainly to those of us who have seen or sensed the same suffering; to the few and the brave who make the effort to ensure that their loved ones living in a nursing home still have a life worthy of living; who want to visit their loved ones with the same frequency, the same informality, the same spirit of home that they shared when their loved ones lived independently.

There are some things I have learned by observation and some by blunder that may be of use to you in pursuing the best care for your loved ones in a nursing home.

Nursing home residents who have families that visit often get better care, period. So visit as often as you can. Visit at different times of the day and night. Come in the back door from time to time. Call on a regular basis, on different shifts, and ask for an update. Gently and firmly insist that whenever and however you contact the nursing home, you will expect a detailed and accurate status report of your loved one's health and state of mind.

Get to know the people who work at the home, the RNs, the CNAs (who carry the brunt of the burden of care), the kitchen staff, housekeeping, and finally, the management. Learn names

and use them. Realize that you will encounter several types of worker - and work ethic - among the people who work with your loved ones.

It takes a special kind of person to care for the elderly in a kind and competent manner, day in and day out over twelve hour shifts at the bottom of the pay scale for nursing. Some of these people are angels in human form and you will be lucky to find them caring for your family members.

You will find that some staff members are willing and able but simply inexperienced. Encourage these people. You will also find that some staff members are plagued by the same deficiencies of work ethic that weakens the foundation of so many other American businesses. Be generous with your praise for the people that work directly with your loved ones; be prudent with your criticisms. Save the brunt of the criticism for management.

A good nursing home manager will be able to listen to your concerns, your complaints, and your anger without becoming defensive. They are paid to realize that everything you say is potentially loaded with a wide range of powerful emotions. If you are a frequent visitor to your loved one in a nursing home and if you are intent on insuring the best possible care for that loved one, chances are that you will be in a manager's office from time to time. Learn the chain of command and do not hesitate to use it. If you do not get the answer you need in one office, proceed to the next higher, and the next. Keep phone numbers, addresses and email addresses handy, including the address for the Georgia Department of Community Health.

In my own experience, it was not always possible to be everybody's friend and receive the best care for my family members at the same time. You should be cordial and if you are lucky you can achieve a real working partnership with the nursing home, but when it is necessary do not hesitate to remind the management that, for the extraordinary amount of money your family is paying for care, you are the senior partner.

Helping your loved ones find the best of care in a nursing home is a delicate balance. That balance can be easily upset by the powerful emotions that you will face while you accompany them on their final journey. Just remember that the point of balance is always quality of life for them. Let that be your guide and you will make the right decisions.



"IT'S ON MY MIND.."

Danny H. Parris

Belongingness for my loneliness

Some psychiatrists say that man's two most severe problems are depression and loneliness. Loneliness has never been a respecter of persons. Some of the world's most renowned artists, writers, composers, kings and queens have battled loneliness. No matter one's occupation, whether painter, plumber, preacher or politician, all have suffered loneliness. Some of us experience it to a greater degree than do others. There are times in our lives when we experience it more than at other times. Loneliness is not a respecter of age. Little children suffer loneliness as well as senior adults. In fact, children sometimes will create imaginary playmates to cope with loneliness. Dr. Paul Tournier, a Swiss medical doctor, writer and theologian, said, "The most prevalent malady today, throughout all society, is loneliness. The common pain of the whole body of humanity... of all ages... of all strata of life, all levels... economic, social, intellectual... The common pain is loneliness." Loneliness springs from a feeling of alienation and estrangement. Loneliness has its roots in our first parents, Adam and Eve. When they sinned they were cut off, separated and alienated from God the Father. All of us whether Christian or non-Christian will experience loneliness.

None of us are exempt. But the question is how do I deal with my loneliness? How can I reduce its intensity in my life? Well, we need to know that we are more than a number: a phone number, social security number, bank number, or church number. We are a unique created person of God. We are loved, cared for, wanted and necessary by our Creator. We also have a purpose in life to belong. We belong to God, to family, to friends, to churches and causes by relationships. We do not overcome loneliness by isolating ourselves, running away or feeling sorry for ourselves. Self-pity does not help us heal. In fact, self-pity actually deepens our feelings of loneliness. The first step in eliminating feelings of alienation, isolation and separation is reconciliation through Christ, God's Son. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (II Cor. 5:18-19). You cannot fool yourself into feeling better; neither can you feel better by trying to fool others. There is no exit from loneliness without facing up to your feelings. Your being lonely is not a sign of weakness. Tell God how you feel. The song writer said it for us: "Are you weary, are you heavy hearted? Tell it to Jesus... He is a friend that is well known" (Jeremiah Rankin). He is able to conquer the loneliness of your life.

To shut the door to loneliness in your heart, make room in your life for others. Those, who are willing to be a friend to the lonely, will in good time say goodbye to loneliness in their own lives.



"Walk faster! I think it's a Senate candidate!"

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 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.

Stevens 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).

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 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 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 their 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.



Towns County Herald

Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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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

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

DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWS COPY & ADVERTISING
Fridays at 5 PM

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
TOWNS COUNTY (1 YEAR) \$15
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