

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

History Should Never Be Mystery

"The Father of the American Navy", right? Most of us give credit for that moniker to John Paul Jones and perhaps John Adams. However John Barry was our first appointed captain of a Continental Navy warship on December 7, 1775.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



After our war for Independence Barry was America's first commissioned US Naval officer by order of President George Washington in 1797.

Barry always loved the sea, being born March 25, 1745 in Tacumshane, County Wexford, Ireland then being evicted from their home by the British. Moving to Rosslare, a coastal area, he worked on his uncle's fishing skiff then became infatuated with life at sea; he became a ship's cabin boy.

By March 14, 1776 John Hancock, president of our Continental Congress, commissioned Barry as a captain in our Continental Navy. Barry was a Christian and began each day at sea with a Bible reading. He always held crew members in high regard, provided them with their needs, and assured their well being. John Barry possessed instinctive leadership skills, those required of superb leaders.

Barry went on to command United States ships Delaware, Lexington, Raleigh, and Alliance. He had many colorful engagements with the British Navy, wreaking havoc upon their vessels and capturing many prizes for our fledgling America.

In the battle known as "Battle of Turtle Gut Inlet, faced with impossible odds, Barry commanded Pennsylvania's brig, the Nancy, to secretly at night to offload our precious powder supply as she was about to be captured by the British blockader, the Kingfisher. Barry left the Brits an unwanted surprise with a delayed action fuse attached to the remaining 100 barrels of powder aboard the abandoned Nancy thus ending those British seamen's attack upon our new nation just upon boarding her. That most certainly was a brilliant execution and command of our men, by Barry and others serving what is now our homeland, ultimately sent the British back to England, just as committed men and women still do today. Never forget!

It is notable that Barry authored a book that improved Naval signaling communications in 1780 and on May 29, 1781 was seriously wounded in command of the Alliance, capturing HMS Atalanta and Trepassey. The final naval battle of our American Revolution occurred 140 miles south of Cape Canaveral 10 March, 1783, Barry commanding the once again overcoming the British, for the record known as the world's most powerful adversary. Not so much with folks like John Barry in command! February 22, 1797, John Barry was issued Commission Number 1 by President George Washington, grandfathered to June 4, 1794. Barry was now Commodore. John Barry is the first American commissioned naval officer but also as its first flag officer.

John Barry remained head of our Navy until his early death from asthma on September 13, 1803, having sacrificed most of his life for our precious newborn America, and never having any children. John Barry represents just one more of thousands of reasons why we should never, ever forget!

If interested, please do further research in our libraries or online.

Semper Paratus

Forever War

About ten years ago it began to be popular so say "thank you for your service" to veterans and active duty members of the armed services. It was a sign of the maturing of our social consciousness, and sorely needed after a generation of Vietnam veterans came home to both apathy and hostility from a conflicted public.

Many of us were children at last to separate the soldier from the war, to support the former without condoning the latter.

We've had many opportunities to cultivate this particular insight, though we seem to need regular refresher courses. In the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Indian Wars, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish American War, WWI, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War and the Global War on Terror, over 1.1 million American men and women lost their lives.

I was lucky to be in the Marine Corps during one of those rare periods in our recent history when the involvement of our armed forces in police actions and nation building was at a minimum.

I was also fortunate never to send a child or a sibling off to war, or wait for a parent's return, though there are many stories in my family about what it feels like to experience these things. Until recently, these were just stories, poignant, but long ago and far away.

Last week it became a lot more personal when I said goodbye to a friend on his way to one of those sandy places on the other side of the globe where we have sacrificed almost 7000 American lives and spent about a trillion dollars in the global war on terror.

My friend is a young man who had already chosen a path of service, just beginning his career as a police officer, just starting to settle into his new life and career, but when his national guard unit was called up, with no hesitation and no regrets, he was prepared to go. At a recent holiday gathering I said goodbye to him with a lump in my throat.

It's hard for me to imagine what his parents must be feeling, the worry and uncertainty that never completely goes away, the sleepless nights, the visceral anger, and the dull ache. Many of you know exactly what I'm talking about.

So yes, we support the troops. God bless them, and we sincerely thank them for their service. They are the best of us. But as our forever war drags on into its second decade, we remember also the sacrifices made by the families of those men and women who serve at the convenience of our government. The gratitude we extend to our soldiers should be shared generously with those who wait and worry and pray, and to those of you who do, thank you for your service as well.

Surely there is more that we can do beyond giving lip service to the gratitude we feel for someone else's sacrifice. Is it not also our duty as well as our right to require of our politicians who, on paper at least, work for us, that they end this forever war? That they cease making enemies for us to fight? That there be an accounting of the costs in blood and treasure for the sake of those young people who are about to join a war that began before they were born?

Scarcely in the history of the world has one people existed as the natural enemy of another. Enemies are made on the Wall Streets of the world, not the Main Streets.

Is it learned helplessness that keeps us silent, or are we content with sacrifice as long as it doesn't affect us personally?

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The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Farm Bill

We have a new farm bill coming down the pipe that is going to be impactful for our farmers. I am going to do my best to explain the history of the farm bill, what things are in the new farm bill, and how it's going to affect people. I'll just give forewarning that I am not a lawyer or politician so some of the deeper inner workings are beyond me, and like most government documents it's very long. Therefore, this is going to be a very brief overview of the farm bill and its purpose.

The first farm bill came into being back in 1933 as a result of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl in the Midwest. At the time there was a great need from many hungry Americans for food. The first farm bill addressed this need by buying food from farmers to be given used as food aid. Ever since then nutrition has been a significant portion of the farm bill. In the 2014 farm bill nutrition was 80% of the farm bill budget. The remaining 20% includes crop insurance, conservation, and commodities among other things. A new farm bill is created approximately every five years.

Commodities works to make sure that farmers growing major crops such as grains, soybeans, and peanuts receive support so that they can stay afloat. These payments take place as revenue insurance to support farm income. Price Loss Coverage is an example of commodity program that makes payments to farmers when revenue or crop prices are low.

Conservation serves to protect vulnerable lands and take them out of production as a way to protect soil, rivers, and enhance biodiversity. The Conservation Reserve Program pays farmers to put sensitive and highly erodible land in 10-15 year contracts. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program splits costs with farmer for practices that protect the environment.

Crop Insurance is also provided to farmers through the farm bill. Usually the government will require farmers to purchase crop insurance if they are taking subsidies for commodities. Whole Farm Revenue Protection provides insurance to farmers who grow a variety of crops and have diverse farms because diverse farmers have lower risk.

There are a number of other programs that are included in the farm bill. The topics that I have covered are ones that are generally in every farm bill in some shape or form. These topics have received an update in pricing and the amount of support that farmers will receive.

The biggest change that will be coming through with the new farm bill is the legalization of hemp growing. Hemp will be legal at a federal level, although it will still be heavily regulated. Hemp can be a valuable fiber crop for farmers. It remains to be seen how this will come about, regulation and enforcement will present some new challenges.

There is a lot more to the farm bill than what I have talked about here. If you have more questions about the farm bill contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

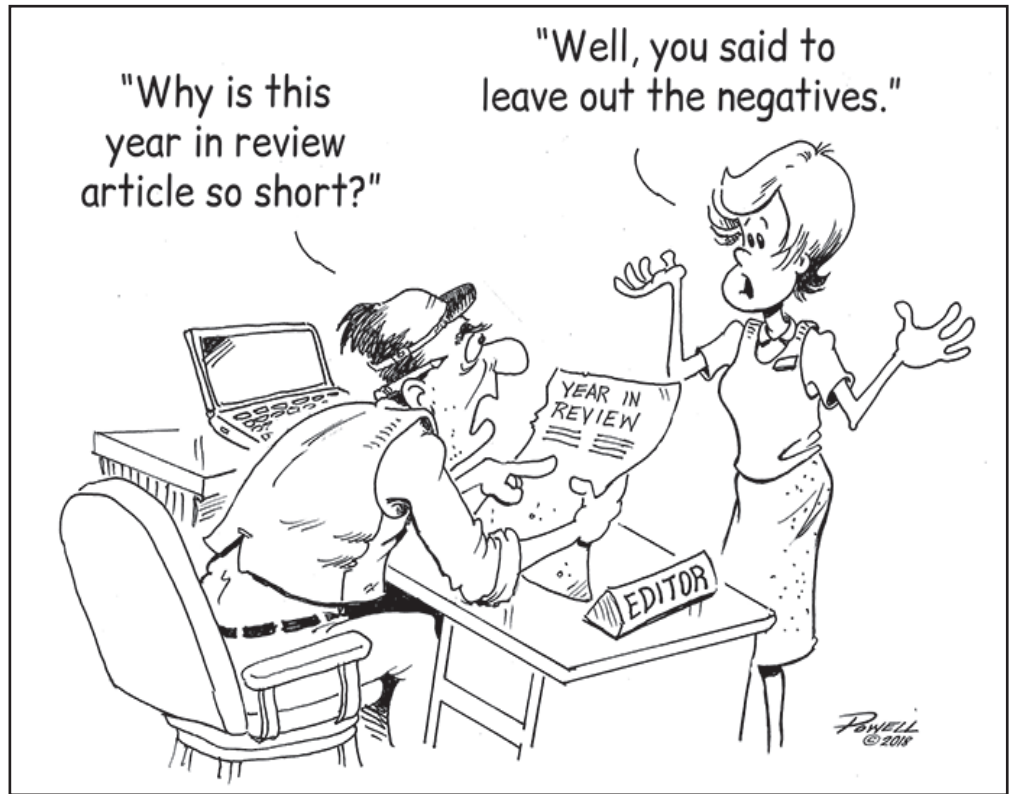
UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Letters to The Editor

Hope For Our Earth

Dear Editor,
Christmas is indeed a time of hope. A bright light has appeared in the sky, and that light is the possibility that our Congress is now looking seriously about taking action on climate change. The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend bill was just introduced in the House of Representatives 3 weeks ago with 3 Republican and 7 Democratic co-sponsors, and an almost identical bill was introduced in the Senate this week, again with bipartisan support. These bills would not only decrease greenhouse gases by 90 % by 2050, but economic studies show it would put more money back into most Americans pocketbooks and add 2.8 million new jobs over 20 years. This would be a WIN/WIN for both the environment and the economy. Climate change affects us all, and now is the time for us all to come together to solve it. We are not a Red America or a Blue America. We are the United States of America, and, working together, I believe there is literally nothing we can't solve.
Vernon Dixon, MD



Smoke Alarms - The Wake-Up Call We Need to Hear

Most of us use alarm clocks to wake up in the morning and if we miss it, we are just late for work, but a more important wake-up call we need to hear can save our lives and is a Smoke Alarm. When a smoke alarm detects smoke, it emits a shrill sound that as my granddaddy said, "could wake the dead", which in the case of a house fire is critical so we don't become one of those. Most deaths in house fires are caused by smoke inhalation as it overtakes its victims who never wake up. A smoke alarm can give us a head start so we can survive a house fire. Smoke alarms are installed on ceilings where smoke will gather first, and the alarm will sound to alert us before the lethal smoke moves down to claim lives. We should have smoke alarms in each bedroom in the house so when a fire starts, and smoke begins to flow along the ceilings we can be alerted to the danger and escape. Smoke alarms provide a critical early warning of fire, allowing additional time to escape. National estimates of reported fires show that in 2011-2015, fires in homes with no smoke alarms caused an average of 940 deaths per year. An additional 510 people per year were fatally injured in fires in which smoke alarms were present but failed to operate. Power source problems were the leading cause of smoke alarm failures. Hardwired smoke alarms were more likely to operate than those powered solely by batteries. In reported home fires in which the smoke alarms were present but did not operate, almost half of the smoke alarms had missing or disconnected batteries. Nuisance alarms were the leading reason for disconnected smoke alarms. The risk of dying in reported home structure fires is cut in half in homes with working smoke alarms. Installing smoke alarms is the first step, but it is most important to be sure they are working. Half of the home fire deaths resulted from fires reported between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when we are usually asleep and not aware of what is going on around us. Statistics show that the percentages of home structure fires and civilian fire deaths reported between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. were higher for properties with smoke alarms that did not operate or with no smoke alarms than in fires in which smoke alarms operated. Smoke alarms give us a sense of security, so we can sleep, but if they aren't maintained, that sense of security will be false and can lead to death by smoke. Most home smoke alarms use either ionization, photoelectric, or both sensing systems to detect a fire. Ionization-type smoke alarms have a small amount

of radioactive material between two electrically charged plates which ionize the air and cause current to flow between the plates. When smoke enters the chamber, it disrupts the flow of ions, reducing the flow of current and activating the alarm. Photoelectric-type alarms aim a light source into a sensing chamber at an angle away from the sensor. Smoke enters the chamber, scattering light onto the light sensor and triggering the alarm. Photoelectric alarms respond slightly faster to smoldering fires; ionization alarms respond slightly faster to flaming fires. Ionization alarms are less expensive and the most widely used. Smoke alarms are appliances, just like toasters, televisions, and furnaces. Unlike other appliances, these devices function quietly in the background, and its alarm, in response to a real smoke situation or to testing, is the only evidence that it works. A television that will not play will not lead to tragedy, but a smoke alarm that fails to sound in a fire, could. Roughly half of the smoke alarms collected as inoperable and studied in the National Smoke Detector Project were more than 10 years old, hence older than the currently recommended replacement age. Alarms designed solely to detect smoke should be replaced every 10 years. Buying, installing, testing, and maintaining home smoke alarms is essential protection from fire, but it is not enough. Many households have not developed the escape plans that would allow them to use the extra warning time smoke alarms provide effectively. Escape plans identify any obstacles to secondary exits if the main door is blocked, a meeting place outside the home for household members to gather, and makes provisions for household members who need help. We can "Fire-wise" the outside of our homes to lower the risk of destruction by a wildfire, but we also need to protect our families on the inside by installing, maintaining, and regularly testing our smoke alarms that are our first-line of defense against fire and smoke while we sleep.

For more information on Smoke Alarms, contact your local Fire Rescue Department or Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D at: info.cccrd@gmail.com.

RC&D
Frank Riley
Executive Director



Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
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Alzheimer's Supp.	McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	6 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Chamber Board	1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
VFW	VFW Post	5:30 pm
Historical Society	Hist. Soc. Bldg.	5:30 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Conv./Vis. Bureau	Civic Center	8 am
Gem & Mineral Club	Senior Center	1:30 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Church	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
Basket Weavers	SC Fire Hall	10 am
USCG Aux.	Senior Center	7 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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