

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

It's Been 75 Years

Iwo Jima, Historical Overview: The Battle of Iwo Jima from February 19, 1945 to March 26, 1945 marks one of the key offensives by American forces to achieve victory in our WWII effort against the Japanese. This Japanese island is located 650 miles from Tokyo, midway between Japan and US bomber bases in the Marianas. The strategy anticipated was to allow for landing the Marines on Iwo Jima to accommodate escorts for our long range bombers, en route to bombing missions in Japan, to be defended from Japan's air assault by short range escorts.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



American naval forces, 450 ships had the island surrounded, yet the Japanese, numbering approximately 22,060, were entrenched in over 16 miles of underground tunnels and interlocking caves. Even though our naval and air forces had commenced heavy shelling and bombing of the island on 15 June 1944, and continuing through the morning of 19 February 1945 our 30,000 Marines of 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine divisions encountered very heavy resistance. We had committed more than 60,000 US Marines, several thousand US Navy Seabees, alongside our US Navy, Army, Air Force, and Coast Guardsmen who represent, to this day the very best of American determination and love of country.

Mount Suribachi, on the south end of this small island where our Marines raised the first flag on this rough volcanic island is often thought of as the final chapter of this horribly expensive piece of real estate, wasn't the final task of our Marines and our entire amphibious landing forces tough mission. The Motoyama Plateau on the northern end was yet heavily defended and had to be taken.

These young men of the Marines, Navy, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard well aware of these hardships in advance, were not deterred, never forgetting they were there for our USA, YOU and I. Never, ever forget them; ALWAYS honor our men and women of our armed forces.

Iwo today: As of Monday, June 18, 2007 the Japanese Geographical Survey "renamed" Iwo Jima as its original name, "Iwo To" or Ioto. Both names mean "sulphur island". The official map was released on September 1, 2007. Disgruntled former residents of the island had requested this change. As to be expected our Veterans and military leaders remain unflinching in addressing this island as Iwo Jima.

In 1944 there were only about 1000 residents of this barren island and were evacuated by Japanese forces, leaving only a few very unfortunate younger males behind to help them fight American forces. Civilians were not allowed to return, post war, as our military forces had exclusive domain, command and control. However in 1968 Iwo Jima was returned to the Japanese and today is a base for about 400 Japanese soldiers and visiting US Navy airmen.

This Ogasawara Island is still littered with ruined remnants of one of the bloodiest battles ever fought. The reinforced tunnels and foxholes built by the Japanese prior to our invasion still exist. And Iwo Jima is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Tokyo metropolitan government. Visitation is almost impossible, being open to a once a year visit from an organized tour company. Also as it is recorded, the Japanese navy officers who first came to "sulfur island" are the very ones who misinterpreted the name into "Iwo Jima" instead of "Iwo To". Further addressing the decades long disapproval of "Iwo Jima", the island's original civilian residents got their island's name back in 2007, only after petitioning the Japanese government.

Call this faraway destitute island whichever name you prefer, but never forget that without our men and women in uniform who were willing to sacrifice anything and everything including their very lives are the heroes responsible for Japan being one of our strongest allies today, much needed in a world with many hostile ideologies, not dissimilar to the Japanese fascist government of that era. Had Americans not had the expertise, wherewithal and courage to produce and implement the use of a horrible nuclear weapon of war, the loss of lives on both sides, as well as the threat to world stability would have been multiplied immensely. Please remember those Marines, soldiers, sailors, airmen and Coast Guardsmen who gave their lives, not just on "Iwo To" but all across the globe and from the beginning of America's history.

Today our world survives those almost identical threats, little different from the tyrannical threat of "Tojo", as well as the NAZIs back then, for the same reason. The singular reason we continue to survive is because of our superb men and women in uniform, with God's helping hand, not because of politicians, philosophers or any other entity.

Semper Paratus

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 E-MAILED 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 pointlessly, 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.

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 Towns County Herald is
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The Issues Remain The Same

This article was written 15 years ago. Much has changed in that time, but the issues discussed here have not.

The recognition of oil as a strategic resource dates back to World War I, when warfare became mechanized. At the end of World War I, the victorious allies began to carve up the territories of Germany and its ally, the Ottoman Empire. Since Great Britain and France had no known oil reserves in their native territories, particular attention was paid to the Persian Gulf area. Oil had been discovered in what is now Iran, and since what is now Iraq is geologically similar, there were almost ten years of in-fighting between the United States, Great Britain and France over Iraq before the first oil was ever struck there. In 1920, an agreement between the British and French to exploit Persian Gulf oil which excluded the United States was denounced in the American press as "old-fashioned imperialism." There is irony.

In 1928 the famous "Red Line Agreement" divided an area of what was then Asia Minor and Arabia between the three countries. (Apparently this agreement was something other than imperialism.) However, no provision was made for indigenous populations, and there you have much of the originating dynamics of today's resource wars in the Middle East. Much of world history since World War I has been fueled by oil as well. Japan, for example, was desperate for oil and steel and the 1941 oil embargo by the U.S. virtually guaranteed that Japan would have to seize the oil fields in the Dutch East Indies to survive. The American naval fleet, recently moved to Pearl Harbor, was the only force capable of intervening.

War is always about resources/economics. The "great causes," the politicizing, the rationalizations are the masks that hide the Beast. Many combat veterans will tell you that a soldier fights for his brother. If he fights for a country or for a cause, it is not to protect the profits of multinational corporations or to guarantee lower prices at the pumps. A citizen, by the same token, is more likely to be inspired by calls for "freedom" or by fear and hatred of the enemy.

We have been told for the last 19 years that we are engaged in a world-wide war on terror, and without a doubt there are people who wish to do us harm. I do believe, however, that the real terror, the fear that has haunted every President since Wilson, is the potential loss of the one commodity which built and maintains this country and even this civilization: oil.

Humans existed for millennia before Petroleum Man, and they will probably exist after he is gone, but Petroleum Man fears change, and he will fight to avoid it. You and I are Petroleum Man and Petroleum Woman.

If you do not think so, ask yourself what you would do if gasoline was \$7.00 per gallon tomorrow and every other price adjusted accordingly. How many businesses would close? How many retirement funds would collapse? How would a population carrying almost a trillion dollars in personal debt, concentrated in cities and away from food supplies, dependent on transportation and infrastructure that is dependent on an increasingly hard to obtain commodity, adjust? How would a government that is the largest debtor in the history of the world adjust?

Now, expand this scenario to include the European Union. What about Asia, with an economy that, at present, depends on lending us money to buy their cheap manufactured goods; Asia, which has seen demand for the same oil exceed its ability to produce it domestically?

Our leaders have been asking these questions for quite some time now. They do not seem to believe that we can handle the truth, so they tell us "They hate us because they hate freedom." They do not seem to believe that we can handle an alternative lifestyle or develop alternate technologies in time to avoid economic collapse and chaos.

They have long been willing to take us to war to avoid change and to postpone the inevitable. They may be correct, but if we do not begin to ask these questions and demand answers, our future will be decided by a few rich and powerful old men who are as far removed from our lives as we are from the pioneers.

We need to ask these questions every time we buy the biggest car and drive it over the speed limit, drive instead of walk, throw away the plastic packaging, turn up the heat instead of putting on a sweater, leave the lights on outside while we sleep inside. We need to ask these questions every time we buy gas that originated in the Persian Gulf instead of our own hemisphere.

When this article was first written, the United States imported far more oil than it does today. We are still dependent, but much less so on oil from volatile parts of the world. We have achieved this through the bludgeoning technology of fracking that may include future costs and unforeseen consequences.

As our attention is once again drawn to the middle east and our fears are focused this time on Iran, I would ask that you do something for your future. Begin to ask yourself some frightening questions. Turn off the computer. Turn off the television and put down the remote. Turn off the floodlights. (It's called, "dark," for Pete's sake and it's really nothing to be afraid of. Just close your eyes and try it...)

We are five percent of the world's population and we use twenty five percent of its energy! Put on a wool sweater, not one made from oil, and walk outside. If you can see the stars through the light pollution and the smog, know that your son or daughter, your wife or your husband, your father or your mother in Afghanistan or on their way back to Iraq looks at the same stars and wonders about you.

That soldier may lose his life before the night is over. If that soldier is so far from home to protect your lifestyle, what would you give up, what would you be willing to change, to save that life?

How can we, in all good conscience, not ask these difficult questions? People are dying to answer them.

The Middle Path
 By: Don Perry
 onthemiddlepath.com

Feral Hogs

Feral hogs go by a couple of different names, but any way you spell it they are trouble. They are a prevalent problem throughout Georgia and without proper management will only get worse here in the mountains. They do a lot of damage to farmers' crops and to homeowners' lawn and gardens. Let's talk about the damage that they cause, and what can be done to control them.

UGA extension
 Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Feral hogs can be found in 45 of the 50 United States. It's estimated that the current hog population is about 6 million in the U.S., with 200,000 to 600,000 residing in Georgia. It's estimated that hogs do 150 million dollars in damage each year in Georgia. About a third of that is done to homeowners. Nationwide it's estimated that the annual damage done by wild pigs is \$1.5 billion. From these numbers it's clear that we don't want their populations rising here in the mountains any more than they already have.

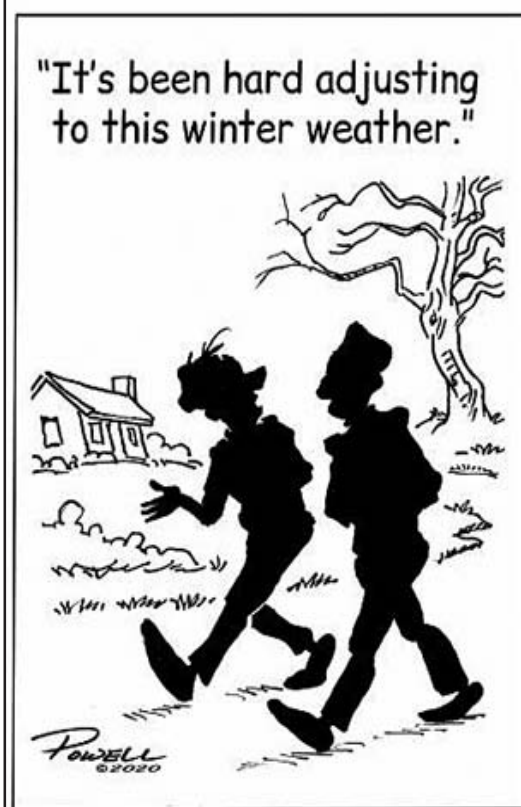
Feral hogs are highly adaptable to a wide variety of environments. The females are capable of having 6 piglets in a litter twice a year. They will consume just about anything that they come across. There are not many natural predators to pigs, and their familial groups keep predators from having access to the young. All of these are reasons for why feral hogs can become a huge problem.

So how can you control wild hogs? There is no silver bullet when it comes to wild hog control. Using fencing to exclude wild hogs from an area is possible but this is really only practical for small areas. Usually wire mesh and electric strands are used.

Due to their adaptability, and destructive nature, lethal control is often the only viable option when it comes to controlling wild hogs. In Georgia you are allowed to shoot wild hogs year round, there is not a wild hog season. Hunting wild hogs with dogs is a popular option, but not a very effective one. You may remove a couple of wild hogs, but the bulk of the family will remain unscathed. Baiting and shooting is also popular. This is more effective than hunting with dogs. The bait will draw in the wild hogs and then you can remove them from a tree stand or on the ground at a distance. The problem with all of these methods is that hogs are very smart. So, if you don't take out the whole family they will learn to avoid your method.

Trapping is the most effective means of removing wild hogs. Corral traps with drop doors are the most popular. A corral trap allows you to trap a high percentage of the family at the same time and eliminate them all at once. Some of these traps are quite high tech with you being able to activate them from your phone. These are effective, but also expensive. Once you have trapped the wild hogs you must kill them. It is illegal to transport wild hogs. Please abide by hunting and firearm regulations to make sure that you are hunting in a way that is in compliance with the laws.

The Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) covers Fannin, Union, Towns, and Rabun counties. Our SWCD has a hog trap that can be used by people in the district. The purpose of the trap is to assist people in dealing with feral hog problems. If you have questions about using the hog trap contact your county Extension Office, Ryan Talton at rtalton@ucschools.org, or me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Sharp UMC (Men)	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Wednesday: Hiawassee UMC	Noon
Bridge Players	Every Thursday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Every Friday: Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Hospital Auxiliary	Third Monday of each month: Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	6 pm
MOAA	Michael email mva62sgn@brmemc.net	
YH Plan Comm.	Third Tuesday of each month: YH City Hall	5 pm
Co. Comm. Mtg	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Blairsville store	5:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 pm
Quilting Bee	Third Wednesday of each month: McCConnell Church	10 am
Book Bunch & Lunch	Daniels Steakhouse	11:30 am
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month: Clubhouse	6 pm
Republican Party	Civic Center	5:30 pm
Goldwing Riders	Third Saturday of each month: Daniel's Restaurant	11 am

Towns County Herald

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