

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Who Was Donald Hauk?

I certainly don't know much about him and never heard of him until browsing through a DAV (Disabled American Veteran) magazine. In fact upon scanning the internet there's very little to find. Did he serve America in uniform? I don't know. Here's what I learned and this is pertinent for each and every American:



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran

Donald was a skilled craftsman, using gold, silver and gems of all sorts. He looked out for elderly neighbors and provided foster homes for homeless animals. He was a welder and maintained a small apartment complex in Cincinnati, Ohio. Hauk made exquisite jewelry in his spare time. And he acquired a small fortune selling his fine handmade jewelry and necklaces at flea markets alongside collectable knives. His dress attire was often a buckskin shirt, big hats and handmade jewelry. He was somewhat of a loner in his home life, and lived most of his years alone. When Donald died his only vehicle was a 24 year old Toyota 4Runner and over three quarters of a million dollars.

However, in his sixties he created a trust that designated his life savings to those he thought might need help, including America's DAV. Hauk never sought credit for anything he ever did, including this gift to those who served America thus creating his legacy, only after he was gone.

Why is this man's life so important to those of us who have never heard of him and know little to nothing about him?

Simply because he is not much different than the hundreds of thousands of Veterans who have served America, all of us, in one or more of our five branches of the military. Each of us, only one know our family members and those Veterans that we have become associated with and perhaps became friends with in our life's journey. We've read about many more, and of course know of those who have done heroic acts. We know of those who have sacrificed themselves for others. However not a soul amongst us will ever know the vast majority of those, who like Donald Hauk, served others very quietly, came home and enjoyed their all American individual lifestyles. We didn't know Hauk and we certainly don't know all those who served honorably, but we owe them all so much.

Can we ever repay them? No way! But, like Hauk each of us can give a little bit of our time, or perhaps a monetary gift to an organization that serves those who have served and need a little support. And the easiest gift is that of respect, love and honor for those we know and for those we'll never know. Never forget the singular reason that you and I enjoy the freedoms, liberties and pursuit of opportunity that we have been blessed with, for over 243 years.

Semper Paratus

The View from the Recliner

I'm always pleased when a reader makes an effort to respond. We always hope that those who do take time to write have actually read, and ideally, have understood the article that piqued their interest. Unfortunately this doesn't always happen. Last week a reader objected to the assertion that the root causes of war are fundamentally economic. We don't have the space here, or the desire, to present a detailed rebuttal. Suffice it to say that the horrors wrought by Hitler are often mentioned as an example of a war fought in a just cause, and I agree that US involvement was both just and inevitable for that generation. But Hitler was a mutation, an outgrowth of the economic devastation and punishment of Germany after WWI. As for Japan, in the 1930s the Japanese desperately needed to acquire resources they lacked to supply a population consuming far more than they produced at home. This expansion threatened American and European economic interests (i.e. colonies and protectorates).

To suggest that the US spent the better part of the decade before WWII trying to contain Japan because of atrocities committed in China ignores the prevailing racism towards Asians at that time. The average American in 1937 had little concern for the fate of Nanking, but American industrialists were very concerned that the US could lose the Philippines to Japanese expansion. The Philippines, lest we forget, were "acquired" from Spain after the Spanish American War. Fast forward to today when we are confronted by "madmen of extreme religious intolerance." I agree, and those who wish to do us harm must be dealt with. But any attempt to frame this conflict in "justice and morality" requires a very narrow read of history.

We're 19 years out from the attacks on September 11th, attacks which certainly justified a response. But we didn't respond by officially investigating and prosecuting the Saudi connection, although 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudi citizens. Instead, we destroyed Afghanistan. Then we destroyed Iraq and justified it with Bush Administration lies about weapons of mass destruction. In 2011, President Obama and Secretary Clinton spearheaded UN Resolution 1973 to save the lives of "peaceful pro-democracy protesters." That sounds very much like a just and moral cause, and the intervention ended in abject failure, the destruction of another nation and another Pandora's Box of warring factions, refugees and jihadists. We'll mention Syria in passing, because that Obama legacy is still unfolding on President Trump's watch.

A few weeks ago I suggested an abundance of caution in choosing to sacrifice American blood and treasure confronting Iran. It would be difficult to find a more extreme theocracy or more intense hatred of the US and Israel than that which is found among the leadership of Iran. How do you suppose these "monsters" were created? The story picks up near the end of WWII when the British approached President Truman for help in recovering the "British" oil recently nationalized by the democratically elected government of Iran at that time. Truman refused, but Eisenhower later authorized the covert activities which led to the overthrow of that government and the installation of Mohammad Reza, the "Shah of Iran." Americans have forgotten this history. The Ayatollahs have not.

The building of empires, colonies and protectorates; the destruction of economies and infrastructures in the pursuit of just and moral "nation building;" the orchestration of coups and the application of military power to protect corporate interests, have always created and will always create enemies: "mad men," religious fundamentalism, rebels, revolutionaries and martyrs. Welcome to the history of the world.

Justice and morality will always be found in people of good character, no matter what cause they champion, but the genesis of war happens in back rooms and board rooms. The origins of war are messy and ugly and immoral, and they usually involve people in a position to privatize the benefits of war while socializing the costs. In order to socialize the costs in blood and treasure of war, people like us must be convinced that we are paying for a cause that is just and moral. To make our sacrifice palatable, governments must control the narrative around war, and this often means that true origins and motivations are concealed or misunderstood. A sure sign that the narrative is working is when those who question it are themselves called into question. Not their arguments, but their integrity.

This is where we cry foul. A reluctance for war and a skeptical attitude toward the need for sacrifice should be a uniting concern, an apolitical concern, not a "gotcha" moment for sticking a tired old label on someone of a different political persuasion.

How many irreplaceable young men and women will be sacrificed by our permanent political class of the corrupt and the corpulent before we object? Are we really that self absorbed, that safe, in the comfort of our recliners?

It's difficult to express how weary I am of the dramas of the left/right divide that are blinding us to the workings of the world. If you believe the climate is changing you must be a liberal. Wrong. If you support the Second Amendment, you have to be a conservative. Wrong. Are we so thoroughly manipulated that the left wants a powerful government to force adherence to a social agenda, and the right wants a powerful government to bomb evil regimes into rubble, but neither side notices that the one thing they agree on is more powerful government?

Today let's again lay claim to that middle ground where there are many people I know who agree: Liberals and Conservatives, and veterans of both perspectives who agree that war is a great evil, and if it becomes a necessary evil, it must always be a last resort. I agree with the reader that wearing a wool sweater won't do much to stop the wheels of history from turning, just like a single gas rationing ticket or metal drive during WWII had much of an effect, but the cumulative effect was significant. Most of the "wool" I've worn was found in the scratchy and uncomfortable Service A's issued by the Marine Corps, and that minimal contribution is negligible compared to those who sacrificed their health or their life, or a son or a daughter or friend's life for whatever was in their heart when it stopped beating. And be advised, if left unchecked, the sacrifices made on the battlefield do eventually reach the recliner. We'll leave you now with a tribute to war which was apparently lacking in our previous discussion. In war, there is much honor to be found at a personal level, in a family who sends a son or daughter to fight, in a team or a squad or a platoon. These are all places where honor can be highly concentrated. But in Washington, DC and in every other capital of the world where war is hatched, honor is often so highly diluted as to be impossible to detect.



Crape Myrtle Pruning

Crape myrtles are a very common tree that many people like to plant in their home landscape or you may see them lining roads in towns. There are couple of reasons why crape myrtles make great landscape trees.



The first is that they are very disease and insect resistant, there are not too many pests that will bother them. Powdery mildew is the most serious disease issue that crape myrtles will usually have, and it rarely kills the tree. Ambrosia beetles will attack crape myrtles, but generally they only attack trees that are a ready dead, dying, or stressed. Crape myrtles also come with a variety of flower colors, making them very attractive. Finally, crape myrtles come in a variety of sizes. Varieties range from dwarf to semi-dwarf to full size, meaning mature tree heights range from 3 to 30 feet tall.

Pruning is important for crape myrtles, because the blooms only form on new growth. Even more important is selecting the right sized variety for your location. If you select a variety that will grow to a good height for the spot where you're putting it, the pruning will not be difficult, because you won't be as concerned with managing the plant's size.

Now is a good time of year to prune your crape myrtles. Excessive pruning can lead to problems with disease and insects, because the tree is stressed. Bad pruning practices are called CRAPE MURDER. Crape murder generally involves topping the tree, or cutting back all the branches to 3 to 4 feet above the ground. This will result in an oddly shaped tree that produces a lot of suckers.

To properly prune a crape myrtle start at the base of the tree and work your way up. You're looking for suckers, if you find them prune those off. Once you get to where the branches are, remove crossing branches. Crossing branches will rub against each other when the wind blows and create sites where disease and insects can get in. As the tree grows you can remove branches from the lower third of the tree. Removing those branches will expose the trunk character. Some people like to prune off the old seedheads. I think they're an attractive feature. With new growth in the spring the old seedheads will fall off. On some varieties of crape myrtles you can prune in the summer after the blooms are spent to create another flush of flowers. A second bloom is difficult to force on varieties that bloom after mid-July.

A common misconception is that crape myrtles have to be pruned to produce flowers. This is not true. Pruning allows you to shape the tree. If you have a spot where the tree can grow and does not need shaping for space concerns, pruning is not necessary. I encourage everyone to do some research on finding the variety that will fit in the space that they have, because that will solve a lot of pruning issues before they arise.

If you have questions about crape myrtle pruning contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Letters to The Editor

Out of the Ashes

Dear Editor,

The fire was out, but there were a few areas still smoking among the ashes of what had been, up until the night before, the Spry Family Dry Cleaners. We had come to town on errands, and one of the errands was to pick up our dry cleaning. We were very excited about this order, for it was not your average pile of laundry. Yes, there was my husband Rod's favorite pair of pants and the usual six or seven shirts for pressing - one shirt was his original Air Force issue from the late '60s. However, there was one unique item included in this order... it was my 71-year-old Teddy Bear who had been with me all my life.

When we moved into our new home in August 2019, it became clear some of our "antiques" needed sprucing up. Teddy was matted but still had all his appendages, including his tail, two button eyes, a black plastic nose and a red felt mouth. So, we took Teddy to the cleaners for some "restoration." Teddy had been at the cleaners for almost a month. During that time, we called to check on his progress and were told, a couple of times, Teddy was not dry yet. Mr. Spry wanted him very dry so he could fluff his fur. We could not have asked for better service or nicer folks.

Rod got out of the car near the yellow police crime-scene tape and walked over to a small crowd that had gathered there in the parking lot. As he got closer, he could hear this group comforting Chris Spry, who was trying to process the devastation around him.

Mr. Spry knew what was on Rod's mind as he saw him coming toward him and apologetically told him there was no way of knowing Teddy's fate at the present time. Rod expressed how sorry we were for the loss of his business and returned to the car.

There was nothing else to say. My heart was broken, but when I considered the feelings of the Spry Family, I realized my Teddy was not very important in the grand scheme of life.

Weeks passed, and I was able to put my memories of Teddy in their proper place in my heart. However, one day, after returning from playing bridge in Hiawassee to my car parked at Home Depot, there was a sight I never expected to see. Draped over my steering wheel was my Teddy!

Rod had been told by Mr. Spry that Teddy was at the Spry Dry Cleaners in Hiawassee, where he had been sent after the fire for safekeeping. Teddy had been wrapped up in something and had been spared the flames.

Rod delivered Teddy to my car and left a message on my cellphone that said, "Are you ready for some really good news?" That night, I slept with Teddy next to me on a pillow. Rod was not jealous at all :)

Linda B. McClarnon

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TO THE TOWNS COUNTY 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 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.



"Who cares about my shadow when there's a Super Bowl to watch?"

Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
	Every Tuesday:	
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Sharp UMC (Men)	7 pm
	Every Wednesday	
Alcoholics Anon.	Hiawassee UMC	Noon
	Every Thursday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Friday:	
Movers & Shakers	Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Sunday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	First Tuesday of each month:	
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
	First Wednesday of each month:	
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
	First Thursday of each month:	
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Third Monday of each month:	
Hospital Auxiliary	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	6 pm
MOAA	Michael email mva62sgn@brmemc.net	
	Third Tuesday of each month:	
YH Plan Comm.	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
	Third Wednesday of each month:	
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
Book Bunch & Lunch	Daniels Steakhouse	11:30 am
	Third Thursday of each month:	
Friendship Comm.	Clubhouse	6 pm
Republican Party	Civic Center	5:30 pm
	Third Saturday of each month:	
Goldwing Riders	Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
	Fourth Monday of each month:	
Red Cross DAT	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
	Fourth Tuesday of each month:	
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
	Fourth Thursday	
Hiaw. Writers	Hiaw. Pk. Comm. Rm.	10:30
Hiaw. Garden Club	Clubhouse	12:45 pm
	Last Thursday of each month:	
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Kenneth West Owner/Publisher
Shawn Jarrard Editor
Mark Smith Staff Writer
Chad Stack Sports

Derek Richards Advertising Director
Shawn Henrikson Copy Editor
Todd Forrest Sports
Lowell Nicholson Photographer

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$25. Out of County (1 Year) \$35. 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. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee
 Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net
 Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546