

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## USAF: One Five Star General

General Henry "Hap" Arnold was an innovator, with much foresight, a REAL American and somewhat of a rebellious individual who cared more for getting the job done and building America's future than he did for politics and building his own career. If he'd been a Coasty, he'd have been one of us "hooligans". Unknown to many he was also a very charitable man, for which undergraduate college students have received assistance via a grant program honored with his name. As well, Hap was a technological genius, fascinated with aviation. His enthusiasm for research and development led to numerous aircraft designs including the F-35 Lightning and F-22A Raptor. Unfortunately for America and all of us Hap was called Home by our Supreme Commander in 1950 at the young age of 63. Heaven's gain, our loss.

**The Veterans' Corner**  
**Scott Drummond**  
 USCG Veteran



Almost unbelievably Hap was scared of flying. He was taught to fly by none others than the Wright brothers in 1912 in a "Burgess Model H hydroplane, and upon his first takeoff the plane's wingtip listed and caught the water and crashed. He only suffered minor injuries but this and other occurrences ended his flying career. He is quoted as saying, "I cannot even look at a machine in the air without the feeling that some accident is going to happen to it." However his burning interest in aviation never waned. He did continue flying on a limited basis.

As commanding general of the U.S. Army Air Forces approaching WWII our limited air capabilities were obvious and President Roosevelt ordered Hap to resolve this issue. As such General Arnold recognized the concept of our B-29 Superfortress in 1939 as one answer for winning wars against evil, but also as an inroad creating an independent USAF which was accomplished in 1947. Under General Arnold's leadership, 4000 B-29s were built, and our USAF manpower was increased from 22,000 to 2.5 million. Much to the chagrin of established leadership examples General Arnold demanded that problems be recognized as problems proactively, and corrected before they came back to bite you in the butt.

Hap unlike many others who valued their rank above all else, risked his career to testify in the court martial of Col. Billy Mitchell whose bold statements as, "The General Staff knows as much about air as a hog knows about skating.", making him and his cohort Hap extremely unpopular with the establishment hierarchy. ( Sounds familiar doesn't it?) Believe it or not this was in September, 1925 and Billy Mitchell, an Army officer also in favor of creating a separate military service, our USAF, was convicted of insubordination and his career was kaput. As was General Arnold's, ALMOST! The crux of what really occurred was that Mitchell and Hap were extremely critical of the administration building so many Navy battleships instead of aircraft carriers. This was considered borderline treason. ( See what I mean by "hooligans"?!) Knowledgeable historians attribute Arnold's technical knowledge and depth of insight as the primary reason he was not booted from his career.

Too many folks are unaware that more than 318,000 Army and Air Force members were killed as well as 566,000 wounded early in WWII. General Arnold and his wife, Bee founded the Air Force Aid Society in 1942. Providing \$13.5 million for assistance as of 2021 as well as \$5.7 million for the Gen. Hap Arnold Education Grant, \$2000.00 is eligible for AF and Space Force full time family dependent students on an annual basis. Imperatively this is merit based, thus cutting out politically motivated agenda, once again proving General Arnold's rebellious anti-political but extremely Patriotic nature. Dear Lord, we need more like him from top to bottom, and bottom to top!

Much thanks goes to Stephen Ruiz @ military.com for publication and distributing this history, important information and very brief bio of a very large, Patriotic Real American, who accomplished so very much at great personal risk, for America. -Semper Paratus

## Letters To The Editor

### Stand Strong

Dear Editor,

As Christians we are commanded of God to stand strong in Him whatever comes our way. This earthly life here is a testing ground for our faith to see if we are worthy of eternal life in heaven after this life is over. We are not to quit or throw our hands up in disguise or throw in the towel just because we feel like enough is enough or we feel disappointed or depressed, even feel down and out.

All these "d" words come from Satan, who wants nothing better than to pull you down to his level of stinking thinking and trap you into his web of lies. But the Lord Jesus didn't die on the cross so you could wallow in self-pity and cry the blues because things are not working out the way you thought they would. News flash -- this is not about you, my friend, but all about Jesus Christ.

Remember Jesus didn't die on a cross so you could lay back and wait for the Lord's return. He has much for us to do for His kingdom work and expects us to be faithful to the calling He has for us.

Keep in mind the old adage "nothing ventured, nothing gained." It is our responsibility as God's chosen ones to obey God's commands to the letter. Millions of folks are headed out into eternity without anybody telling them about the love of Christ, and shame on us if we don't use the opportunities that the Lord gives us to witness to those who are lost without any hope of heaven.

Not all folks will agree with you; some may think you are crazy in the head, but that should not stop us planting good seeds of salvation. It's like a farmer who sows seeds in his field, not all will come to new growth, but those that do will grow in abundance and a new harvest will be yielded.

The apostle Paul knew the value of human life to the point of death, and for that reason he never gave up when the road ahead was full of promised souls that could be won for God's kingdom.

I would love to see a revival break out in the Blairsville area in our church folks that would spread like wildfire, but it starts in the heart of every believer that is willing to share their testimony of what God has done for them.

Yes, it's easy just to be complacent and lazy about our faith and let someone else do the work. God is well pleased with those who "Go Tell."

Frank F. Combs



## Blueberry Pruning

Blueberries grow pretty well in Georgia. Rabbiteye blueberries are native to the southeast, so they're well adapted to our climate. Let's talk specifically about pruning blueberries.

**UGA extension**  
 Watching and Working  
 Jacob Williams



Blueberries don't need to be pruned every year to be fruitful. However, if you start doing some cane renewal pruning every year on a mature plant the bushes will be more fruitful and have more longevity. The ideal time to prune blueberries is late winter because the plants are dormant. February is late winter for us in the mountains. Plants in their dormant state are going to be less prone to infection or stress from the pruning.

Blueberry is a multi-stemmed bush. Each one of the stems that comes out of the ground is called a cane. Cane renewal pruning is removing old canes from the plant so that there is space for new canes to grow. Ideally, under cane renewal pruning you'll remove old canes each year so that in five years all the canes on the plant will be completely different. Each year go through the plant and cut out the oldest canes that you find. Also, remove any diseased or dead canes. Ideally, you don't want to remove more than 25% of the canes in a single year. If you have a blueberry bush that hasn't been pruned for a couple of years it may take a couple years to get it back into shape. If you have a blueberry bush that hasn't been pruned for many, many years cane renewal pruning probably isn't going to get the plants back into shape. In that situation, I'd recommend something that may seem very drastic, but is better for the plants in the end. Mow the bushes down to the ground. Mature plants will be able to take this hit, and put up new suckers, that turn into canes. This is going to give you fresh growth, and a new healthier plant. You'll go without blueberries for a couple of years. Therefore, if you have several plants that need to be mowed, you could do a couple a year, until they are all back under control.

New plants should be pruned to have the healthiest plants. Prune back 2/3 of the top growth on bare root plants, and 1/2 of the top growth on potted plants. If the new plant has many canes prune out all but 1-3 of the best looking ones. You also don't want a first year plant to produce fruit, so pick off any flower buds. If you prune plants like this the first year, the second year won't need much pruning. In the second year pick off flower buds again, and remove any diseased canes. The third year, remove diseased canes, but you can leave the flower buds on vigorous shoots. The fourth year, the plant should be able to handle full crop, but if you have some weak looking canes, thin out the buds to prevent over fruiting, which can cause permanent bending of canes from the weight.

Each year after harvest is completed cut plants back so that they don't become too tall. Tall plants are more difficult to harvest for people; bears and birds probably won't have that same problem.

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

## Wildfire Mitigation

Mitigation is the reduction of something harmful or the reduction of its harmful effects and to measures taken to reduce the harmful effects of hazards that remain in potential. Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D (ChestChatt) is a community outreach non-profit organization specializing in programs to mitigate and reduce wildfire risks in communities across Georgia.

**RC&D**  
**Frank Riley**  
 Executive Director



ChestChatt is the Georgia Firewise USA Liaison under contract with the Georgia Forestry Commission to administer the Firewise USA program for all of Georgia. As you can probably tell from my articles, we talk a lot about preventing wildfire and educating our citizens on how to live with the ever present risk of wildfire around our communities.

We live in our little piece of Heaven, that we have dreamed about our whole career, thinking that one day we will retire to this paradise, but with risk of wildfire left unattended our dream place can become a big piece of Hell when someone carelessly drops a cigarette, leaves a brush fire unattended, play with fireworks when it is dry, or just plain is careless with things that produce sparks, smoke, and flames.

When ember showers start raining down on our roofs, we panic and wonder "why didn't I just do something to remove the fuel from my around my house when I could?". (We tried to tell you so over and over!). It's too late for that when we see smoke and flames and all we can do now is grab some important stuff and run for our lives to try to escape the flames.

The volunteer fire department can take a while getting there because the key word is "Volunteer", these guys and gals have other things to do everyday and when a call drops, they have to drop what they are doing, get to the fire station to get tools to bring to your fire. If you have done your job to mitigate the risk around your home ahead of time, you and the firefighters can watch the fire go around your house and head somewhere else where there is fuel to burn, but if you have not done your job ahead of time it becomes a defensive battle to try to save your stuff. I know you think it can't happen here in north Georgia, but how good a gambler are you? Willing to bet it all on the once in a lifetime event that "can't happen to me" but does happen to someone, somewhere, every day...don't let it be your turn, so do something now.

Wildfire mitigation is things you can do to buy time until the calvary comes charging up the hill with lights and sirens blaring to help you with your problem. Remember it's YOUR problem not THEIRS, so help them help you! There are tools that can assist professionals and homeowners in mitigating the risk of damage from a wildfire.

Taking steps to make your home survivable and your community adaptable to wildfire helps protect firefighters too. To assess your homes survivability, you must first analyze wildfire ignition risk, hazards, and the values at risk to your property and community. During a wildfire, embers cause most home ignitions. Helping reduce putting firefighters and communities at risk by hardening your home to ember intrusion and creating defensible space on your property.

Wildland fire is a natural phenomenon and is necessary for the health of some ecosystems, however, when these fires get out of control and threaten communities, they become a serious hazard. Defending against wildfire involves understanding that despite best efforts to reduce the risk, it will continue to be a threat. Most of these fires can be prevented. Preventable wildfires threaten lives, property, and our precious natural resources. Wildfire prevention is the action everyone can take to help reduce the number of human-caused fires. The public plays a valuable role in preventing wildfires whether it is properly extinguishing a campfire or keeping your vehicle maintained to prevent sparks, following just a few simple steps can help prevent wildfires, so be proactive to help our firefighters this year. Things like knowing how to properly use outdoor equipment; burn debris safely by following local burn restrictions (and common sense) and ordinances; how to extinguish a campfire; maintain a vehicle and tow safely; and practice fire-safe target shooting, to name a few.

The US Forest Service through the Georgia Forestry commission provides funds each year to ChestChatt to give to Firewise USA communities that apply from around the state. These mitigation funds pay for projects that mitigate the wildfire risk in their communities. We have 124 Firewise USA communities across Georgia from the mountains to the barrier islands on the coast and they all can apply for these funds each year. We try to give all of them something to mitigate their wildfire risks and keep them interested in wildfire mitigation.

We are now processing the applications to decide who read the proposal and proposes to do what the grant requires. The funds will give the community something to start with to mitigate their wildfire risk and hopefully attract more dollars and volunteer labor from the community and other organizations to make a better, safer and sustainable place to live without fear of smoke and flames creeping across our yard headed toward our house.

For more information on mitigation, go to: www.firewise.org and check ChestChatt out on Facebook Chestatee Chattahoochee RC&D.

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## Guest Column

### "What goes around comes around!"

Maybe you know about the Wilhelm scream and how it's related to an alligator in Florida, a cowboy named Wilhelm, Star Wars, Indiana Jones, the Purple People Eater, Rawhide, The Outlaw Josie Wales, and Hee Haw...?

In 1951, during a western movie titled "Distant Drums" and set in Florida, a cowboy screams when he is bitten by an alligator. The same scream was used again in 1953 in "The Charge at Feather River" when a cowboy named Wilhelm is shot in the leg by an arrow. Used in over 130 movies since that time, it was picked up by Ben Burt in 1977 and used in all the Star Wars and Indiana Jones movies...

Nobody really knows who made the original scream in 1951, but we think it was Sheb Wooley, who in 1951 was a voice extra for the movie "Distant Drums" and in 1958 sang the hit song "Purple People Eater." During the 60's and 70's he appeared on television in "Rawhide" and in the movie "The Outlaw Josie Wales." In the 70's he wrote the theme for "Hee Haw." Sheb died in 2003 without ever taking credit for his scream; and now you know the rest of the story!

All of which brings us to Obadiah; it's the shortest book in the Old Testament and often overlooked. But like the story of the Wilhelm scream, there is a complicated story woven into the message of Obadiah to the people of Edom. It's summarized in verse 12, "Do not gaze and gloat [in triumph] over your brother's day, the day when his misfortune came."

When Judah was invaded the Edomites laughed until Obadiah warned them that "pride goeth before a fall," and they might be next. Or to put it simply,

"What goes around comes around!" And that is what the book of Obadiah is all about...

Charles 'Buddy' & Mary Ella Whatley

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