

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Four Chaplains Part II

Clark Vandersall Poling from Columbus, OH was the son of an evangelical minister, who became a Baptist minister. Born August 7, 1910 Clark later studied at Yale University's Divinity School in New Haven, Conn. Obtaining his B.D. degree in 1936 he ministered in New London then in New York.

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



Poling decided to enter the Army, as WWII broke out and desired to face the same dangers as others. Like his father who was an Army Chaplain in WWI, he was advised that he might even have to give his life. He reported to Army Chaplains School at Harvard where he met the other three Chaplains.

John Patrick Washington, born July 18, 1908 in Newark, NJ, prepared for his Catholic beliefs by studying in Seton Hall, South Orange, NJ then college prep courses for his Catholic priesthood. John then obtained his AB Degree, receiving his minor orders on May 26, 1933. He then became a subdeacon, later a deacon in 1934. John was ordained a priest on June 15, 1935. After Pearl Harbor John was appointed as an Army chaplain. Serving in several active duty stations including the 76th infantry, in November, 1942 he reported to Camp Myles Standish in Taunton, Mass. Along with Chaplains Fox, Goode, and Poling.

After assignment to the Dorchester, these four Chaplains mingled with the crew and soldiers, ate chow alongside them and awaited their arrival at their soon to be station in Greenland. This was to never happen because the U-boat (U-233) reported by the USCG had them in her sights and on February 3, 1943 at 12:55 AM sent a torpedo into the hull of Dorchester, immediately crippling the ship, leaving it no electricity, killing many aboard and leaving the ship to sink in ice cold waters in only minutes.

Those who survived had only sparse clothing and no life jackets. The four Chaplains began rounding up cold weather gear, clothing and life jackets, calmly passing them out and directing those who could to the lifeboats that would function and giving them words of reassurance. In the end the Four Chaplains gave away their own life vests and were last seen on the Dorchester's bow holding each other, locking arms and singing hymns and praying.

Those who were not killed in the tremendous blast or taken by the frigid waters were saved by USCGC Comanche and Escanaba. There were only 229 survivors.

The Four Chaplains in the highest form and spirit of humanity gave their lives for others. And today their spirit lives on in many great folks who elect to serve something far greater than themselves. There is much more history to this than this short overview, just as a 60-Minute documentary in 2004 as well as several books. In 1998 February 3 was passed by Congress as "Four Chaplains Day" forevermore in our America.

We can only hope and pray that their unselfish spirit lives on forever through many more Americans, and the undying love of those who elect to serve our nation.

*Semper Paratus*

## The Sweet Spot

With the passing of the recent taxpayer subsidized marketing and sports spectacle (for many of us, football ended in January with the National Championship), the season of traditions which begins around Thanksgiving, that time of year which, with its celebrations and observances inspires us to temporarily set aside our differences, can be said to be truly over.

Our national obsession with politics and identity will soon continue the long and insufferable crescendo of drama that accompanies our never ending campaign cycles.

For those of us who lost friends and suffered anxiety during the last cycle, it might behoove us at this point to take a step back and speculate on the nature of the things which separate us.

For some time now we have struggled to better understand what we perceive to be a false dichotomy that divides almost half of the nation, or at least those of us not too busy making a living to have time for such concerns. Just what is it that separates us into warring camps of conservative and liberal, democrat and republican?

The loudest and angriest among us follow leaders, and leaders in the vast majority of cases carry a red or a blue banner. Yet government itself, and the business concerns which direct government, seem more apolitical. Once elected, our leaders are political only as far as it is necessary to be reelected, and the vast bureaucracies of federal, state and local governments act as entities unto themselves, with their primary goal being their continued existence.

To put it bluntly, politics is for little people, but since our numbers are overwhelming, we hold if we do not find wield a power which is actively sought by business and government alike. Politics is the method by which our power is divided, diluted and controlled.

Political control is achieved by identifying and leveraging the natural divisions which exist between people. By understanding what those divisions are, it might be possible to reduce the amount of manipulation to which we are subjected.

Think of a round of firewood we intend to split. To do so, we look for cracks in the wood and we guide our axe to that "sweet spot." If we hit it just right, far less effort is needed to split the wood. We are not firewood, but we do have vulnerabilities which are used over and over again. In this limited space we can only address a few of those. We will speak in generalities, and we concede the point that there are many exceptions to each of these. Our intention is not to judge, but to observe.

There are several "sweet spots" where a wedge can easily be driven between democrats and republicans, conservatives and liberals. In our opinion, a sure sign of the path of the wedge can be found in the logical inconsistencies, some might say "hypocrisies" that result from our forced separation.

Generally speaking, conservatives tend to be more religious while liberals tend to be more humanist. Conservatives believe in the higher power of God while liberals trust more to the higher power of collectivism. Both yield individual responsibility, the conservative to a belief system and the liberal to a government.

Observe the many splinters left by the passing of the maul. One of the biggest and sharpest is the issue of abortion, which is kindled every election cycle to the point where it is now a litmus test of political affiliation.

The conservative postures as a pro life advocate, but has no problem with capital punishment. The liberal abhors capital punishment, but accepts the termination of life in the womb in a culture which, in its admixture of science and faith cannot agree at which point a human life begins.

The liberal is predictably a defender of the environment. The conservative, when it comes to the environment, has been more of a consumer than a conservator. The conservative would consume the environment to create jobs. The liberal would conserve the environment, but consume the wealth of working people to support the jobless.

Both conservative and liberal allow, and even encourage business and government to go adventuring around the world with our blood and treasure, to meddle unceasingly anywhere that it seems possible to extract wealth.

Distracted and content or angry and made fearful by the wedge of politics driven between us, we have allowed death and destruction and debt, and the transfer of vast amounts of wealth into ever smaller numbers of hands.

Throughout history, every time wealth inequality has become extreme, volatility has ensued. Inequality leads invariably to the rise of collectivism and of socialistic forms of government that are doomed to fail. Even capitalism, the core of the American way of life, degrades as free markets are gamed into crony capitalism and oligarchy. In the end, the only proven method of reducing inequality, is disaster.

Every civilization, every philosophy and belief, every form of government and every nation has a shelf life. All human institutions contain the seeds of their own destruction. Human nature dictates that we evolve and devolve in cycles. When we work together, we slow down the turning of the wheel. Conservatives want to preserve what we have accomplished and hold back the tides of change which threaten those gains. Liberals want to use change to improve the general well being.

Each side has valid ideas to contribute to the common good. But as long as we allow it, the only people who will prosper are the ones driving the wedge.

## The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

## Cold and Plants

First off in this column I'd like to say that my column last week about the government shutdown was not the best timing, because it was reopened the day after I wrote my article. So, I wrote an article about it and the shutdown ended. I'm not saying I caused the government to reopen, but I'm not saying that I'm not the reason either. Hopefully the effects of the shutdown won't be felt for too long. However, you may want to hang on to that article because it could become relevant again on February 15th if the government shuts down again.

The topic for this week's column is the cold and plants. The cold weather can feel very dreary and that there is no life with plants not growing, trees without leaves, and wildlife hibernating for the winter. However, winter is a very important and necessary time of the year for plants. Without it there's a number of important fruits and flowers that would not bloom every year. Let's talk about the effect that cold weather can have on plants and why it's so important.

For some plants they are not just responding to the cold, but they are also responding to the change in day length as the days grow shorter in winter and then longer into the spring. These kinds of plants are called photosensitive, because they are responding to the changes in light. Apple and cherry trees fall into this category. After a satisfactory number of chilling hours have been reached for the plant they will break into bloom. This chilling process is called vernalization. Without vernalization we wouldn't be able to enjoy apples, peaches, tulips, foxgloves and many other plants. Different varieties of plants require different numbers of chilling hours, so it's always best to pick varieties that are well adapted to our climate so that you have the most success with your fruits and flowers.

In these plants there is a repressor gene that is keeping the plants from blooming. The cold causes that repressor gene to be altered so that it's no longer controlling the blooming of the flower. That way when warmer temperatures arrive the flowers can bloom.

The timing of when cold happens is also critical. Last year we had a late freeze after many of the apple trees had already bloomed. Freezing temperatures after bloom can result in flowers dying and falling off. If the blooms fall off of a fruit tree, that tree won't be able to bear any fruit that year. Early freezes can be damaging to plants as well. They are forced into freezing temperatures before being able to harden off properly, and can be severely damaged.

Some plants are able to tolerate cold weather while others can't. Scientists believe the ability to tolerate cold weather comes down to the makeup of the cell membranes in the plant. Cell membranes are made up of fat molecules. Some of them are saturated and some unsaturated. Similar to what you read on the nutrition facts label for packaged food. Scientists think that plants with a higher ratio of saturated fats can freeze more easily.

Winter can seem like a dead time of the year, really it means that new life is just around the corner. If you have any more questions about the effect of winter on plants contact your local Extension Office or send me and email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



## Letters to The Editor

### Dear Litter Bug

Dear Editor,  
I left my home in Macedonia headed for town on Sunday, January 27. On Rt. 76, I saw a long line of trash, specifically magazines, strewn all along the highway for a half a mile. Pages from the publications blew far and wide. I spent part of my Sunday picking up your mess. Unfortunately, there was no name or address on the magazine covers. If you love our beautiful county as much as I do, you will secure your load.

It's the law!\*

Sincerely,  
Liza J. Strub  
\*Georgia State Laws OCGA 40-6-248 & 40-6-254 and Towns Co. Ordinance Sec. 36-31

### Thank You

Dear Editor,  
I would like to personally thank the *Towns County Herald* for helping me advertise my yard sale. By placing it in the newspaper I probably got double the amount of customers. With this help, the outcome of my sale was excellent! Through your support of advertising, I was able to hold a yard sale that raised over \$1400, which will buy approximately thirty year-books for students who can't afford one. Once again, thank you.  
Sincerely,  
Kaitlyn Crowder

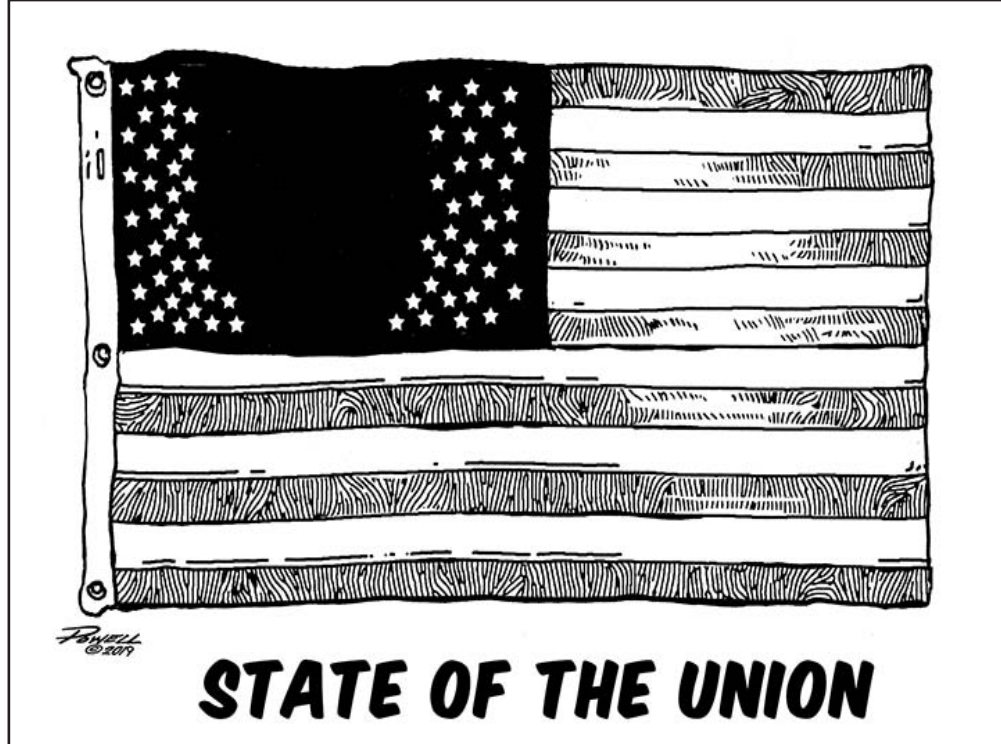
### GUEST COLUMNS

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 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.**



## Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
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
Alzheimer's Supp.	First Tuesday of each month: McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	7 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	First Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	First Thursday of each month: Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Chamber Board	Second Monday of each month: 1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
VFW	VFW Post	5 pm
Historical Society	Hist. Soc. Bldg.	5:30 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Conv./Vis. Bureau	Second Tuesday of each month: 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

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## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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**Publication No: 635540**  
Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.  
**Towns County (1 Year) \$25. Out of County (1 Year) \$30.** 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.  
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