

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

75th Anniversary Battle Of Iwo Jima

Announcing our annual recognition and honor for this epic battle, and iconic flag raising by Marines atop Mount Suribachi. Please bear in mind, that as in all wars and other dangerous missions our men and women in uniform, those who gave their lives are our real heroes, resting at the right hand of our Supreme Commander. They didn't want to die. They gratefully wanted to serve America, and their brothers and sisters in uniform to the best of their ability. Freedom most certainly isn't free, then, now or ever! And since POLITICIANS, NOT soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines are constantly "stirring the pot" with misconceived ideologies, our only reason for existence are those who give of themselves in military service. Si vis pacem, para bellum.

The Veterans' Corner Scott Drummond USCG Veteran



Ephesians 6:12, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."

Please plan on attending this special Towns County annual event forthcoming Monday, February 17, 2020 at 10:00 AM, Towns County Convention/Recreation Center, Foster Park.

This year our most honorable members of our Marine Corps League Unicoi Detachment #783 will host and present significant dialogue on this event which we should never forget. Amongst those will be Marines, Wayne Roshaver; Walt Scott; Sal Laratta (who was there); Ash Todd, Brandy Creel (USAF RET); and Richard Hoihraten (US Navy SEABEE ret).

Sanctioned by our Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw is the forthcoming national announcement to be published in the "Black Sands" magazine in order to invite others into Towns County to see our unique Iwo Jima steel sculpture of the flag raising on Suribachi. Please come see this wonderful statue yourself! Our own US Navy Iwo Jima Veteran, Bud Johnson is attending another event dedicated to the rapidly dwindling Veterans association of Iwo Jima.

"TOWNS COUNTY IWO JIMA SCULPTURE AT FOSTER PARK IN YOUNG HARRIS, GA."

The sculpture which was officially dedicated to all Veterans November 11, 2015, depicts the 1945 raising of the American flag upon Mount Suribachi by our United State Marines during the bloody battle of Iwo Jima.

Welcome to Hiawassee and Young Harris, Georgia located in Towns County. A wonderful Mountain and Lake Community with much to explore from the Grand Views a Top of Bell Mountain to the Vast Shoreline of Lake Chatuge with 14 Lakeside Pickleball Courts. A Community Rich in Veterans Appreciation. When here make sure to visit Towns County Veterans Memorial Park, Hiawassee Squares Salute to Home Town Hero's and our very own "IWO JIMA MEMORIAL". We Thank You for stopping by.

For a wee bit more detailed look at the history of Iwo Jima please refer to back issues of our Towns County Herald, Veterans Corner, dated 1/9 and 1/28/ 2020. Available online for your convenience.

Semper Paratus

Letters to The Editor

Rainfall Data

Dear Editor,

As a hobby, I keep unofficial rainfall measurements at our home in the Gumlog Valley in the western part of Towns and Union Counties.

In 2019 I measured 76.6 inches for the entire year with the driest month in September (0.5") and the wettest in February (12.1").

During the 12 years that I have kept records (2008-2019), the yearly average has been 63.34".

Annual measurements were as follows: 2008 (44.2"), 2009 (72.5"), 2010 (47.7"), 2011 (56.4"), 2012 (50.0"), 2013 (87.0"), 2014 (54.3"), 2015 (79.3"), 2016 (43.1"), 2017 (63.5"), 2018 (85.5"), 2019 (76.6).

Wm. Ronald Gibson

Super Bowl Half-time

Dear Editor,

I, like many of your readers, watched the Super Bowl ads. Two noteworthy ones to me (although I am not a staunch or outwardly demonstrative activist) being about women in space and a woman who is an assistant pro football coach for the 49ers. And yet then came the widely-viewed half-time show featuring various scantily-clad women, in the presence of lots of young girls on the stage with them, simulate sex movements and one even doing a pole dance. HYPOCRITICAL AND SHAMEFUL!

Our message, and that of our society, to women and young girls, should be to take pride in yourselves and don't let anybody marginalize, disrespect or objectify you, because virtue and self-worth have their own rewards.

Claude Spears

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 expressing 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: Name and phone must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

Sticks and Stones

A few weeks ago I was critical of the Obama Administration's record breaking sales of weapons and one of our readers accused me of being a conservative. Last week, after describing the Bush (and Obama) Administration culpability in 19 years of war in the middle east, I was accused of being a liberal. Sticks and stones.

I found myself missing my friend, Alva Barrett. If you've lived in this area long enough, you may remember Alva. She was a formidable and highly intelligent woman, born and raised in Towns County. She brought up her family in the state of Washington, but she never lost her love for our mountains, and she continued to correspond with the home folks here and subscribed to our newspaper to the end of her days.

Alva did not suffer fools, and she wrote some of the most insightful and amusing letters to the editor, well into her eighties. I remember one letter in particular that she wrote after being accused of being a "liberal."

The label wasn't meant as a compliment, rather, it was hurled as a projectile. But Alva grasped the intended weapon and wore it as a medal. She reminded her accuser of some of the names from our history who were similarly accused, including all of our Founders and even Jesus Christ Himself, though she made no claim to any moral equivalence.

Hannah Arendt said, "The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative the day after the revolution." The meaning of a word changes over time, and still falls short of providing understanding. One hundred sixty years ago the republican party was working to abolish slavery. Today, some launchers of verbal projectiles would have us believe that "republican" is synonymous with "racist."

All of this, my friends, sits squarely in the middle of why we write. There will always be those who call names like we did in the fourth grade, and sadly we see that kind of behavior modeled by our leadership and parroted in all forms of media. But for the rest of us, it only serves to divide, to provoke anger and to prevent understanding.

Have you stopped kicking your dog, yes or no? So, you got a new vehicle! Is it a Ford or a Chevy? Projectile labels are symptoms of a false dilemma or other logical fallacies. So you're a republican? Why do you hate purple people? You're a liberal? You must be a vegetarian, and why do you want to destroy the country?

When did being a republican or a democrat, or a conservative or a liberal, become mandatory? A majority of Americans identify as independent, but the national narrative is jealously guarded by two organizations which fall far short of representing the array of choices Americans actually have. After 166 years of opportunities to work together, they have lost the ability to govern effectively.

Most Americans agree that, at the very least, after generations of gaming the system, there is room for improvement in our form of government as it is currently administered. Sadly, as voters we are not ideally situated for making improvements. Our choices in the national realm are few and highly manipulated. We're conditioned for blind allegiance to one party or another, and if we question any part of our party's platform or disagree with its leadership, past or present (after the primaries are over, of course) then we are attacked or ostracized.

The process of making choices for the country is mired in corruption and partisanship, although the revolving door system of legislator to lobbyist is not considered to be "corrupt" by those who practice it. Legislation is bundled like something offered by a cable company, and the question of what is just or effective or urgent takes a back seat to what is political.

The most worrisome aspect of our once and future government, however, is frequently overlooked by those of us perpetually distracted by partisanship. Regardless of the sound and fury of politics, the posturing, the histrionics and the virtue signalling, certain things are always accomplished.

Despite the steady stream of accusations, recriminations and lies, and the shocking sounds of two cats "fighting" at midnight prior to kittens being born, there are certain things that every Congress and every president seem able to agree upon: We will continue to sell weapons all over the world. We will maintain as many military bases as we can borrow money to pay for, and we will continue to use lethal force in parts of the world that a majority of Americans (and about half of DoD employees) can't find on a map. Nancy Pelosi created great political theater by ripping up the President's State of the Union address, but a few weeks prior to that, she voted for his defense budget. Get it?

Our emotions often dictate that we listen, not to understand, but to reply. This shortens the distance between communication and name calling considerably. It's a challenge as old as humanity, but in the end, the only thing that matters is the labels we give ourselves.

Therefore, for what it's worth, I'm not a liberal, or a conservative, thank you. I'm a strong supporter of the 2nd Amendment, but I'd rather stupid people (a label that's hard to get around sometimes) were unable to own weapons. I believe in Jesus Christ, but I'm not prepared to judge how other people live their lives. With my wife and family I've worked very hard to preserve and protect the environment, but I support the American energy companies that make our standard of living possible while we undergo the long process of finding and implementing better alternatives.

To me, these opinions seem logical, based on the best information I have now. It does not matter where they fall under the movable tents of the two party duopoly.

As I get older, I also find that I'm less interested in the opinions of people with no "skin in the game." Everyone has a right to an opinion, but not everyone is entitled to one, so if we're talking about war, which has been the context of the discussion for several weeks now, if you have served, if you are willing to serve, if you have a son or daughter or parent or friend who has been or will be in harm's way, I'll take your opinion under advisement, whether we agree or disagree. If not, well, you have a right to your opinion.

The Middle Path By: Don Perry onthemiddlepath.com

Blueberry Pruning

Blueberries grow pretty well in Georgia. Rab-biteye blueberries are native to the southeast, so they're well adapted to our climate. I have talked about blueberries in the past, but this time I want to talk more 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, except for bears and birds. If you have questions about pruning blueberries, contact you County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



"If the things they're cutting from the budget aren't really needed, why were they in there to start with?"

Towns County Community Calendar

Table with columns for activity, day, and time. Includes events like Bridge Players, Free GED prep, Alcoholics Anon., Hiaw Writers, etc.

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Towns County Herald

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