

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

All Military Ball March 2

Honoring the 77th birthday of our US Navy Seabees there will be a military ball held at the Ball Room of North Georgia Technical College, Blairsville Campus. Social hour beginning at 5:30 PM; Dinner at 6:30 PM; ceremony at 7:30 PM and dance at 8 PM. Attire: Dinner Dress Blues for military; Civilian is Business Attire, black tie optional. Ladies: evening wear. Please purchase tickets by 2/28/2019. Tickets are \$30 for active duty, \$45 for ALL others. Please make checks payable to NSVA Island X-3, Blairsville. Mail to Ed Crenshaw, 9021 Sharon's Way, Young Harris, GA, 30582. Please call Keith Hunter (904-733-8698) or Ed Crenshaw, Secretary NSVA Island X-3, at (706-379-3472).

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



This should be a very enjoyable event with a great bunch of Patriots and some of the finest folks you'll ever meet.

Historical perspective: CB pronounced "SEABEE" or Construction Battalion of our United States Navy. Their very simple motto: "We build, We fight." An engineering/construction (sometimes demolition division) was sorely needed in WWII. Long story, short, Admiral Ben Moreell, the first Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks not to have graduated from the Naval Academy, was the founding father of the Navy's famous Seabees, was largely responsible for overseeing the Bureau's construction programs, both domestic and overseas, during WWII. After long deliberations concerning its formation, March 5, 1942 is officially considered the "birthday" of this unique and elite division of our US Navy. Examples of their duties are airstrips cut out of dense jungles or in the middle of desert terrain, bridges across swamps or rivers, boat docks, outposts, barracks, communication centers, hospital bases, and camps for Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guardsmen. At certain times these engineers may be called upon to use their special skills to "tear down" buildings or other structures deemed "unhealthy for peaceful civilization". They are not just good at what they do; they are unsurpassed, working in any and all conditions which may be deemed impossible elsewhere.

On April 10, 2015 Blairsville, GA became only the third "Island" in the state for all veterans of our US Navy Seabees.

These proud, hard working, good natured and happy guys who have served now have their own post, chartered as Island X-3 GA, to meet, share fellowship, share stories and just like many of our veterans' service organizations are very committed to community service. As Island X-3 GA is now chartered there exists an opportunity for many fine ladies associated with Seabees to form the ladies auxiliary. Navy SVA Preamble of Incorporation:

"We, the Veterans of the Naval Construction Forces and the Civil Engineer Corps of the United States Navy, who have served our Country during time of war and peace, recognizing that service to God and Country is the Foundation on which our Nation was founded, do hereby rededicate ourselves to that service, and further pledge our lives and actions to preserve the fundamental ideals of American Government, which we believe are Justice, Freedom, and Equality for all."

Semper Paratus

Letters to The Editor

Beware! Fake IRS Calls!

Dear Editor,
 Notice: This is a phone call I received the other day and was left on my voice mail. Please do not fall for this.

Hello, this is Internal Revenue Services. The reason for this call is to inform you that your Internal Revenue Services is filing lawsuits against you. An arrest warrant has been served in your name. To get more information about this case file and arrest warrant from Federal data base please call immediately after this IDR recording at our Headquarters that is 830-521-7013 I repeat 830-521-7013 an Internal Revenue Agent is waiting for your call.

Please note the IRS does not, I repeat, DOES NOT call you. It is a scam. Give them no information, just hang up.
Richard Davis

Local Make A Wish hiking team

Dear Editor,
 I am the leader of the Mountain High Hikers "Make A Wish Georgia" team that has accepted the challenge to hike 17 miles on April 13th. We are pledged to raise \$7500 for the wonderful goal of granting critically ill children their fondest wishes. The *Towns County Herald* and *North Georgia News* kindly featured our team photo and request for donations in last week's editions. I was walking my neighborhood this morning, picking up trash as I usually do, when a neighbor pulled up and handed me a very generous check toward our pledge! Thank you David Pittman and all of the wonderful friends, neighbors and hikers who have helped us so far.

Thank you Towns County Herald and North Georgia News for running such an effective plea for donations.

We still need donations to reach our pledge, please call Irene Reiner at 706-970-9822 to support your local team.
With heartfelt appreciation,
Irene Reiner

Is it time to listen to experts?

Dear Editor,
 Over the last several months many expert scientific, economic, and governmental reports have been issued about climate change. The IPCC and the US National Climate Assessment reports have both issued dire warnings about the impending Climate Change crisis. The National Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon, and the Government Accountability Office have also issued recent reports warning of national security risks from unchecked climate change.

The annual Global Risks Report ranked failure to act on climate change as the second most dangerous problem in our world today, and a recent report by some of the leading conservative economists of our time warned of the dangers from climate change and recommended a revenue neutral carbon tax as the solution. Yet, the leaders of our government say they do not believe any of this. This seems extremely dangerous and foolish.

Isn't it about time that we listened to the advice of the world's experts? The bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, HR 763, is a free market, conservative solution that would go a long way towards solving this crisis while still growing our economy. Hopefully our leaders will endorse it.
Vernon Dixon, MD

Sentimental

Some of us are sentimental and some of us are not. Sometimes there are very good reasons for putting the past behind us. Sometimes treasuring the past can enrich our lives and contribute to a sense of place and purpose

Nostalgia can encourage an attachment to keepsakes and memorabilia. I'm not talking about people who simply like to collect things, or those who suffer from the poorly understood affliction of hoarding, though if we live long enough, our accumulation of keepsakes might begin to resemble hoarding to an outside observer.

When it comes to sentiment I'm somewhere between the extremes, but with one foot firmly planted in the nostalgia camp. If it is possible to inherit a tendency towards nostalgia, I know exactly where I got it.

I remember relatives from both sides of my family who filled their homes with memorabilia. Both of my parents treasured their keepsakes. As they got older and began to lose family members to time, their collections swelled to challenge the available storage space with inherited items.

For most of their lives my folks made sure that everything they kept was carefully preserved, labeled and neatly stored away, but as they got older they began to realize that their collection was beginning to get a little out of hand. My dad would laugh and say "One day when I leave this house I'm going to come up out of that basement and lock the door behind me, and then it's going to be somebody else's problem!" If you live long and are lucky enough to be able to stay in your own home, see if the same thing doesn't happen to you. Gravity gets much stronger as we age (I'm sure it's not a matter of us getting weaker), and when you apply aches and pains and sickness to a steep flight of stairs, the antique quilts and handmade furniture stored in the basement and in the attic just don't get as much attention as they once did.

Every new generation reaches a point where the halcyon days of youth can seem more compelling than what we face in the present, but I will always wonder if the generation of my parents was more sentimental than other generations because of the hardships they endured. Both my parents grew up during the Great Depression, when country folk who lived without ready access to goods and services, or money to pay for them, learned that you don't throw away anything that might be useful. They also learned the value of things that modern Americans tend to take for granted. My aunt, who had all the money she needed when she was old, kept a drawer full of plastic bags and rubber bands that she would not throw away, because they were useful.

A large part of my dad's collection was his WWII memorabilia. He was a combat veteran who served in the navy during some of the most intense campaigns of the war. One of his most prized possessions was an old periodical with a picture on the cover taken in Tokyo Bay on VJ Day, 2 September, 1945. Near the end of his life when he struggled to speak, he could still point out his destroyer, the USS Kalk, among the Allied ships escorting the Missouri during the official surrender of Japanese forces.

It was a cruel irony, but thankfully a short-lived one, that the little strokes known as TIA took away my dad's "gift of gab," as he called it, about six months before he passed away. He was a storyteller from a long tradition and a legendary talker among family and friends. On a family road trip to Canada he once talked non-stop across the entire state of Ohio. By the time we crossed the Michigan state line, even my mother's indomitable patience was wearing thin when she very quietly said to him, "Can't we just listen to music for a while?"

As a teenager, I would roll my eyes when my dad would say, "I've probably told you this before, but I'm going to tell it again." As an adult accompanying my senior dad on many outings, I did penance for my youthful impatience, watching how people would react to the old man who had just cornered them at the coffee shop, intent on telling a story. There is no doubt in my mind that veterans are the most patient and respectful listeners on the planet. Dad's "Tin Can Sailors" hat attracted quite a few conversations, and not once did a fellow veteran show any sign that they did not have all the time in the world to listen to one of the last of the Greatest Generation telling his story.

My folks have been gone now for several years, and their stories, (along with their collections of keepsakes) live on with me. I'm grateful that I realized something very important while my parents were still alive. Their collection of memories, the telling and re-telling of stories - these were not foibles of old age. They were part of an effort to keep their memories intact, and to preserve a sense of self in an ever changing world.

Think about it. Over time everything that we hold dear, everything that is familiar, changes or goes away. We can find ourselves lonesome in a world of rapidly accelerating change, and if we live long enough we watch our friends and loved ones disappear on our way to becoming truly alone. (Our nursing homes are full of people who have nothing and no one familiar left in their lives.) Our senses begin to betray our understanding of the present as we lose the context of the familiar. Our memories of the past can become more real, and more comforting, than what we think we see around us.

My dad told stories and collected old tools. My mom kept quilts and photo albums. It was an effort to preserve the rich tapestry of their lives, to bring forward into the present a reckoning of the past. Their efforts carried a hope that the memory of the lives they lived might somehow survive into the future. They knew many years ago that I would not be giving them any grandchildren, so the stories and the treasured objects were a way to pass on their legacy. I intend to share some of those stories here.

If you are fortunate enough to have older people in your life, take whatever time is necessary to listen to them. Their stories are more important than most of your desire-driven agenda. Like me, you may wake up one day to discover that someone you love has grown old, all of a sudden, when you weren't looking, or when you were too busy to notice. Hindsight is not universally comforting. It can be like seeing the answers to a test that you can't take over again. I hope I passed the test.

Perhaps I'll find out one day, when I'm an old man telling my own stories.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

ONTHEMIDDLEPATH.COM

Erosion Control

Georgia, along with much of the southeastern US, doesn't have a positive past with erosion. Repetitive cropping of cotton in the Piedmont resulted in seven inches of topsoil being washed away into the ocean. Soil takes hundreds of years

to create, meaning that the loss of a soil is something that will be felt for generations. By the 1950s, new policies and programs began to change Georgia from endless cotton fields to forestland and other uses that are less susceptible to erosion. In the mountains, there is always a threat of erosion if we aren't proactive with protecting our landscape. Let's talk about why we should care about erosion and some things that you can do to make sure that your land isn't eroded away.

With the high amount of rainfall that we receive in the mountains, erosion caused by water is the biggest concern that we have, so I'll focus on that. Erosion is also caused by wind and gravity. According to the US Department of Agriculture 2 billion tons of topsoil are lost each year in the US because of erosion. The topsoil is the most nutrient rich part of the soil, and so plants rely heavily on it for growth. Therefore, losing topsoil is going to reduce your plant growth. Erosion can also lead to water quality issues. Not only does the topsoil muddy up our lakes and rivers, but also the nutrients that the topsoil is carrying can create algal blooms leading to decreased aquatic life. That is bad news for our lakes and the fish that inhabit them. Erosion can also create a hard pan that will repel water and increases surface runoff.

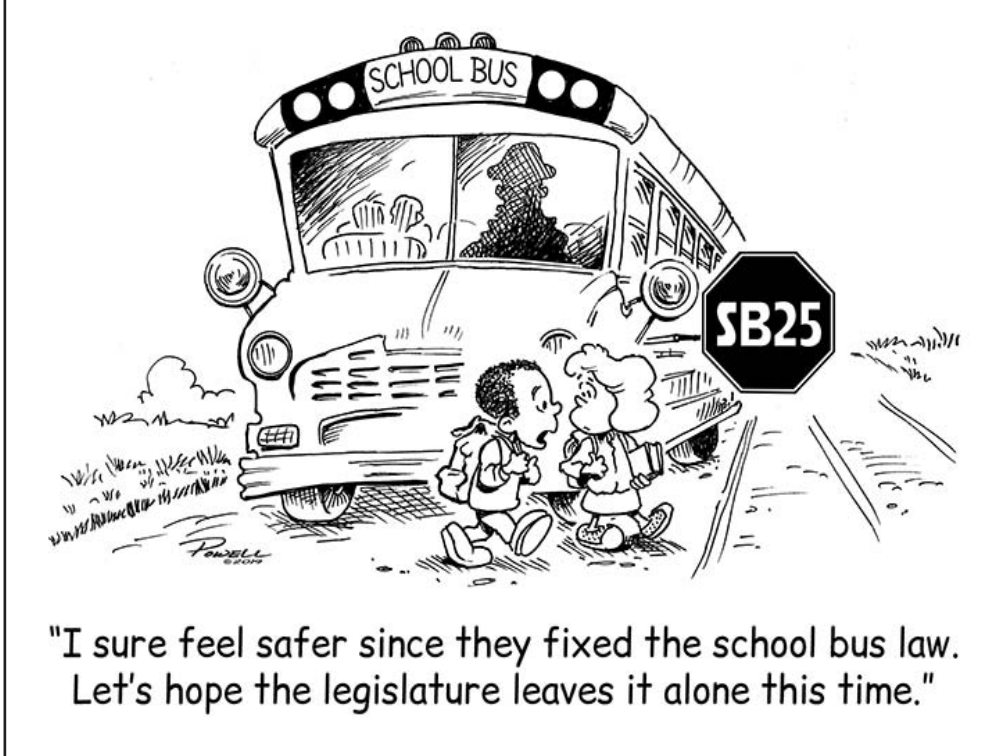
So let's talk about what you can do to reduce erosion. First, construction makes soil very susceptible to erosion. Removing all the vegetation from the top of the soil leaves it open to the rainfall. Whenever possible in construction, surround the project site with hay bales and silt fences, preserve the already existing vegetation, and keep any piles of loose vegetation or gravel covered.

Keep stream banks covered with vegetation and trees. Those plant roots will solidify that stream bank so that the natural erosion process will be slowed down. It will keep the stream from widening. In gardens and around the home use mulch or compost when possible to protect bare soil. This will improve water infiltration into the soil and reduce runoff.

Minimizing impermeable surfaces such as the driveway or walkway on your property will also reduce erosion. Obviously, you will need some impermeable surfaces at your property, such as a roof for your house. For cases like that, it's important to design pathways for the water from those impermeable surfaces to travel so that they can be deposited in a rain garden or pond. Rain gardens collect water allow the water to infiltrate back into the soil instead of having it run downhill. Usually they have plants that are adapted to living in damp soils.

If you have any questions about erosion or what you can do to prevent erosion at your property please contact your local Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	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
Hospital Auxiliary	Third Monday of each month: Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	6 pm
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: McConnell Church	10 am
MOAA	Call Joff @ 386-530-0904	
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
Red Cross DAT	Fourth Monday of each month: 1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Lions Club	Fourth Tuesday of each month: Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Hiaw. Writers	Fourth Thursday: Hiaw. Pk. Comm. Rm.	10:30
Hiaw. Garden Club	Clubhouse	12:45 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Last Thursday of each month: Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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 Hiawasse, 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, Hiawasse, GA 30546.

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

Towns County Herald

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