

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## NFPOW Day April 9

What do those initials mean? National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, this forthcoming Friday, April 9, 2021. Timing is appropriate as to those men and women who came home after being POWs it certainly is a rebirth just as we celebrate Easter as a rebirth.

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



Please do not confuse this day with our National POW/MIA Day to be recognized this year on September 17, 2021. We humbly recognize those that were captured and/or missing on THAT day as they very well may never come home.

This day, on this coming Friday recognizes the strength, perseverance, endurance, patriotism and faith exhibited by those who were captured by our nation's enemies and were subjected to brutality and torture that most all of us cannot bear to imagine. And they made it home!

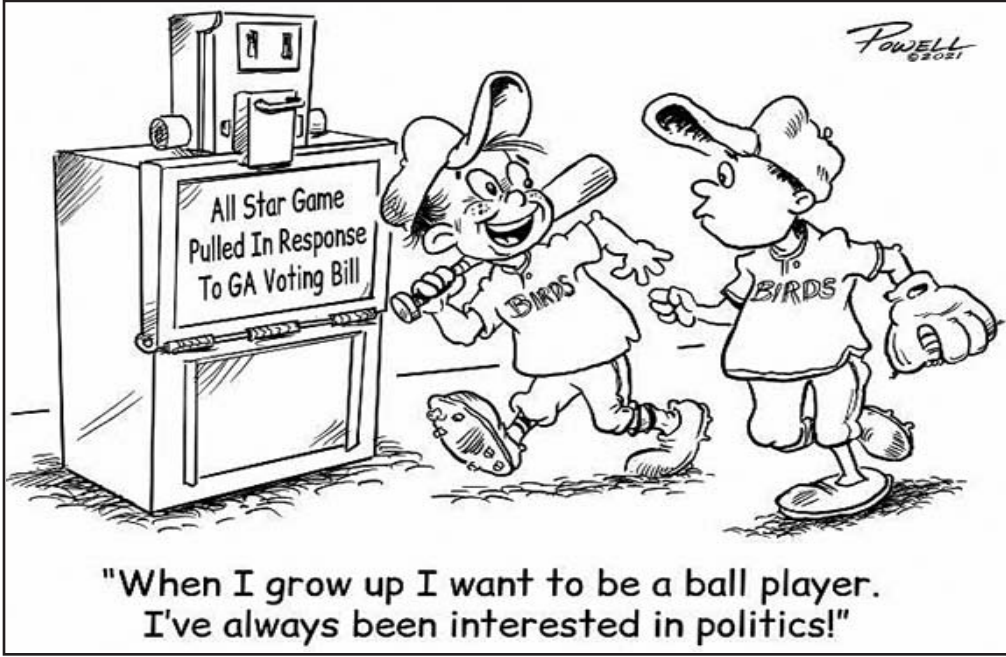
History documents that on this day in 1942, a large number of our U.S. Forces were taken prisoner by the fascist Japanese army on the Bataan Peninsula of the Philippines. Only after prolonged battles in the most extreme conditions imaginable were our troops captured, then forced to march 65 miles to the Japanese prison camp. No medical attention, food or water resulted in thousands dying. Of course those who survived were just beginning into their nightmare of brutal treatment and suffering for two more years! Just thinking of this history makes me wonder if I could have survived? I have serious doubts. But would I have served my United States of America, knowing possibly that this could happen to me? Yes, of course! Did and would. I count myself as lucky and blessed in many ways.

Ever since our Revolutionary War it is estimated that over half a million service members have been captured, not counting those lost or never recovered. Thus each and every POW endures that which we rarely think about. They DESERVE a day of recognition as the heroes they are, at the very least.

Our Former POW Recognition Day may observe this day with ceremonies and any fitting events. Always observe and fly our POW/MIA flag 365 days a year. Our American Legion is a prominent leader in this sacred, honorable effort to never forget.

History: In 1984 a group of POWs began seeking a day recognizing former POWs on April 9th annually. Then in 1988 Congress approved of legislation certifying the date that captives of the Japanese were taken prisoner on Bataan. Our late great Commander-in-Chief, Ronald Reagan [RIP], through his Proclamation #5788, set forth on April 1, 1988 that henceforth we, as Americans should observe April 9th as National Former POW Recognition Day. As we all should. And recognize our little black POW/MIA flag flying along with our National Colors at our wonderful little Towns County Veterans Park. It may be small but it means a LOT!

*Semper Paratus*



"When I grow up I want to be a ball player. I've always been interested in politics!"

## The Bonfire of Vanity

"I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Are you spending too much time on social media? Here's a quick fix: Ignore anything that didn't originate with the sender. My incomplete, biased and unscientific study of the matter predicts that this would eliminate 95% of what you see on facebook or twitter, and free up an astonishing amount of time.

Memes are the easiest to ignore. Occasionally they are thoughtful or funny, but often their true purpose is not to promote humor or thoughtfulness, but to support a political or social narrative.

Few people realize how much of what they assume is generated by private individuals actually has institutional backing and an agenda behind it.

Need to make deeper cuts? Ignore the videos people send you, the ones that arrive throughout the day, the ones that seem to suggest that our friends and acquaintances must be permanently attached to their phones.

It makes you wonder, doesn't it? Is any work being done in offices throughout the land? Apparently there are hordes of unemployed or freeloaders, judging by the volume of material circulating.

Who has the time to watch one video after another? I don't even have time to watch the ones people I know send me, much less the ones that seem to appear everywhere pixels travel. I also don't have time to read the scores of articles people post and share, and I'm a very fast reader. The exception to this is becoming increasingly rare, and that is when the sender has actually read the article (or wrote it) and wants to have a discussion about it.

Discussion is becoming scarce. We participate in discussions when our intention is the discovery and sharing of truth. When we think we already possess the truth, as too many do from one side of the partisan divide or another, then discussion becomes narrative. Narrative eliminates the need for discovery, in fact, it insulates us from it. We participate in narratives in a modern day bonfire of vanity where everyone is urged to contribute fuel to the fire. Click "like." Click "share" and fan the flames!

Consider the recent Dr. Seuss narrative. From out of the blue, an insignificant event became a viral narrative complete with memes and a side of outrage.

A mere half dozen books out of a vast body of work including more than sixty titles were taken out of publication, and all of the books selected had sold very few copies for some time.

It happens every day in the publishing world, but someone decided to frame this as another attack by "woke" culture on traditional American values.

Who decided to make this into "news?" Who propagated the headlines and generated the memes which kept the anger and agitation going? What might the intent behind these actions have been?

The narrative consumer has already begun to forget Dr. Seuss. Fresh offense has issued forth from the narrative controllers as it always does.

The truth seeker, however, might have learned something new from the old, established facts which have been part of the public record for decades.

Here are a few facts that the narrative for outraged conservatives missed: Theodor Geisel, also known as Dr. Seuss, once worked for a New York daily tabloid which promoted communist propaganda and aggressively lobbied the Franklin Roosevelt Administration to shut down conservative media which opposed his agenda. Geisel lampooned the opposition as racists and anti-Semites. Ironic, isn't it?

A more recent narrative focuses on our own state of Georgia which, despite helping elect a senator and a vice president of color, still invites stereotypes of racism because of the solidly republican state government which reflects the vast majority of the state outside of the cities.

The current target is Georgia's new voting laws which, when all is said and done, still make it easier for minority voters to cast their ballots here than in New York, Virginia or Indiana, to name a few. The full story has little chance of piercing the narrative when mainstream media parrots the same headlines, "Georgia Strikes Out," from local news to nationally syndicated websites.

Few outside the corporate media narrative and those posturing token submission to that narrative have acknowledged the passive or implied racism in the assumption that Black people are not capable of carrying picture IDs, navigating websites or finding a polling place on a map, and therefore need the benevolent hand of the privileged to rescue them.

But no matter what we believe about the new laws, is baseball the place to arbitrate the disagreement, or are we content with corporate personhood (as per Citizens United) calling on other corporate persons to join together in accomplishing political goals?

The ideal consumer/partisan does not question the narrative, does not need to, because by either aggravation or validation the narrative supports firmly entrenched opinions.

The right issue, when properly wielded, inflames and galvanizes opinion and perpetuates the divide which prevents reasonable people from discovering truth.

We might consider that before we forward that next meme and throw another stick on the fire.

**Outside The Box**  
 By: Don Perry  
[worldoutsidethebox.com](http://worldoutsidethebox.com)

## Blueberries

I think that most people enjoy eating a handful of blueberries. Eating them always reminds me of my grandfather because he always puts them on his cereal in the morning. Blueberries grow pretty well here, but there are a few things to be aware of so let's talk about those so that you can have a successful blueberry crop.

**UGA extension**  
**Watching and Working**  
 Jacob Williams



If you are selecting a site to plant blueberries, choose a place that will receive full sun for at least half a day. They can grow in shady spots, but the fruit production will be less. Blueberries like soil with a pH of 4.5 - 5.2. This trait makes them well adapted to native soils because most of our soils will naturally be in that range. Therefore, lime is probably not needed when planting blueberries. Rabbits do best with 5 - 6 feet between plants in row and 11 - 12 feet between rows. When planting make sure you don't plant too deep. After planting prune back 1/3 to 1/2 of the plant. This will cause the plant to focus on developing its root system. The first year you want to pick off any blooms, because you want the plant to put its energy into growing roots and not fruit. You can apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 after the plant has begun to put on leaves the first year. The second year after planting put out 2 oz. of 10-10-10 in March and July. Make sure not to over fertilize blueberries, as that can harm them. After the third season, apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 per foot of height on the bush.

Blueberry bushes do require pruning each year. Once plants reach 6 feet high you'll want to start cane renewal pruning. This means removing 1 - 3 of the biggest canes each winter at ground level. Over a period of 5 years the bush will be completely renewed. New canes are going to bear more fruit than old canes so it's important to maintain this pruning process. If you have bushes that haven't been pruned for a few years, it might take several seasons to get bushes into the 5-year rotation. After you've picked the fruit, you can top plants if they are over 6 feet tall. This will keep bushes at a more manageable height.

Blueberries aren't bothered by many insects or diseases. However, one disease to look out for is mummy berry. It will cause berries to shrivel up and drop. The berries that drop carry the pathogen over to the next year. Therefore, it's important to keep the space beneath your bushes sanitary. Remove any old berries, wood, and leaves. Placing thick mulch around the base of plants will help prevent the disease from spreading as well. Captan is an effective fungicide at controlling mummy berry, but the timing of the application is very important. You must apply it while the flowers are in bloom because that is when the infection occurs. You must spray Captan every 7-10 days during bloom. Serenade is another product that you can spray instead of Captan that is organic, but it is not as effective.

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

## Smoke Gets In Your Eyes?

Oh man, isn't it swell to find companions who travel harmoniously with you? Such were our former neighbors Tony and Teresa. Now some, I'll even venture most, moving to The South as middle agers would try to tell you every flaw this region of the good old U S of A exhibits. These two people, from Ohio no less, knew they were on a layover and getting closer to heaven. Tony was less vocal about it but Teresa expressed a true fondness of what for her was the other side of the Mason/Dixon Line. She was particularly taken with the addressing of folks by double first names. Hearing Jim Bob, Betty Sue, or Sara Kate thrilled her to pieces. She, at her request, became Terry Lynn to me. She calls me Carrie Dale, and although born in Georgia, I'd never used my first name. Don't get me wrong, Terry Lynn was quite proud to have been from Ohio. I suspect the operative word here is from.

After a few short out of town jaunts, I suggested to Terry Lynn that since we all geed and hawed together so well, a longer trip was in order. The look on Terry Lynn's face reminded me of the big-eyed but otherwise blank expression of kittens' faces when mama cat holds down a struggling bird to teach her babies that it's last call. The bar is closing. "What does that mean?" Terry Lynn asked. "Going someplace farther away?" or something like that was my reply "No, no, what does geed and haw mean?" she asked. I explained the reference to giving directions when farming with a mule back when people, well, you know, farmed with mules. She liked that but it got lost in translation or Toledo when she told Tony we were all flying to San Francisco because Dale said we plow well together. Tony was befuddled.

Plane tickets procured, bags packed and the wild blue yonder awaiting, the trip commenced. After touchdown in San Fran, a cab whisked The Four Funsters to a rather posh hotel. Tony, a smoker, was a considerate man in general, and especially so with tobacco use. John and I preferred to sleep in a nonsmoking room and Terry Lynn preferred to sleep with Tony so we were designated different floors. We agreed to settle in our rooms and meet in the bar in 15 minutes. 45 minutes later Tony and Terry Lynn explained the tardiness. It seems the room to which they were shown was already occupied by a traveling salesman who saw no need to shut the bathroom door of his own suite. It was a real "caught with his pants down" situation for the ciggie smoking salesman. Tony and Terry Lynn were given a different room. Outcome of bellman and Unlucky Striker, unknown. This is another (as yet unlisted) reason not to smoke. You learned it here first.

See You Around Towns!

The Towns County Herald is an independent and nonpartisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articles covering local events, etc.

**Around Towns**  
 Dale Harmon



## Letters to The Editor

### Election Integrity Act of 2021

Dear Editor,

There have been a lot of misrepresentations regarding Georgia's election integrity law. Some have labeled it racist supposedly because persons of color are less capable of meeting the very basic requirements. It has also been called voter suppression because it makes it much more difficult to cheat and therefore "suppresses" illegal votes.

Neither of these arguments are valid. More recently it's being said that it is too complicated for the average voter who may or may not be able to find the right number on their driver's license.

For example, the new law now requires that mail-in ballots have a driver's license number recorded on the application. The correct number on a driver's license is clearly marked "DL NO." But, lo and behold, according to the left, some people will not be able to figure that out. This is typical leftist elitism that thinks they're making a valid argument when in reality they're insulting someone's intelligence.

Clearly, anyone who is as careful as they should be with something as important as a vote will be able to make the proper selection before mailing in their ballot. But the libs don't see it that way. They believe that the act of writing down a driver's license number is just too difficult for absentee voters.

It seems that Biden and the rest of the Dems clearly don't think much of their voting base.

Tim Groza

### Being Called

Dear Editor,

I have never been an activist or involved in politics but I am being called to do it now. I am fed up with the constant lies and manipulation from the main stream media, the absurd agendas coming from the far left, and the feeling that my rights according, to our constitution, are being chipped away little by little. I am done just sitting around watching and waiting "to see what happens". It's time to stand up America.....it's no longer about being Republican or Democrat, left or right, or anything in between. It's about being an American.

Start with just one thing you believe in, one thing that you can see that is wrong, do some research, get the details from a reliable source and then speak up and don't stop! Take it as far as you can. Talk about it, post about it, write letters to the editors, call your senators, join like-minded individuals and keep going. Fly your flags. Let it be known that you are in and you are not rolling over. We have to all come together, find common ground, and get in the fight. I am feeling it so I know you are too! "United we stand, divided we fall..."

Penny Johnson

### Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!  
 Contact us at 706-896-4454  
 Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM

## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

**Kenneth West**  
 Owner/Publisher

**Shawn Jarrard**  
 General Manager

**Todd Forrest**  
 Staff Writer

**Derek Richards**  
 Advertising Director

**Shawn Henrikson**  
 Copy Editor

**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