

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

I was ignorant of certain facts

During my proud years and opportunity to serve our nation in our USCG, I knew that women, our nation's ladies served in positions as nurses, secretaries, clerks and other positions. However, in my older years, I have learned that today more than 21 out of every 100 airmen in our USAF are women. More than 15 out of every 100 soldiers are women. More than 9 out of every 100 Marines are women. More than 20 out of every 100 sailors are women. Plus over 14 percent of senior enlisted personnel are female, and almost 15 percent of females on active duty have earned a commission via OCS or equivalent. Plus Admiral Linda Fagan has been nominated to serve as the Commandant of our USCG.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



I have come to know a few of these fine ladies who have served in Vietnam under very adverse conditions, as well as our dear friend, Brandy, USAF who served in the "sandbox" in the Mideast. It is obvious that there's a distinct difference between men and women, yep, I'm a confirmed binary person and thank God for those differences. That being said there are some women who are far superior than male counterparts in certain job assignments within our armed forces, just as men are superior to women in others. That statement does NOT in any way contradict men and women who coalesce and make our military services far superior as we most certainly need! I have very recently met a fine very young lady who works here in Hiawassee on an important job, who enlisted in our US Army National Guard.

Our nation's women have served, not only in our nation's recent history but from our birth as a fledgling Sovereign Republic, like Deborah Sampson (1760-1827) who disguised herself as Robert Shurtleff (serving in our Continental Army for 17 months with the Light Infantry Company of the 4th Massachusetts Regiment. This was an elite troop of almost 60 men selected for their superior height, strength and military capabilities. Even though they were outnumbered by British Redcoats, they raided and captured 15 enemy soldiers.

During our not so civil war, Sarah Emma Edmonds (1818-1898) assigned as a field nurse, served as a Union spy, infiltrating the confederate army on several occasions. In WWII, Mary A. Hallaren (1907-2005) was the first woman to officially serve our US Army. Some of these heroic exploits that I research and read of make me wonder, "Could I have done those things, in my younger, much better days?" This list could go on.....

There are many women who have served our great nation that we will never know of or about. But know this, being one of our grandmothers, daughters, mothers, aunts, wives, cousins, nieces and friends, our nation's women have been Patriots and strong in that respect when they recognized the need. They are special and should be honored, as such, just exactly as our men who have HONORABLY served our America should be!

-Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Trending Today

Dear Editor,

Having crossed the threshold of antiquity, I find myself sounding the way my parents and grandparents used to sound whenever they commented on new things trending in their day. We could probably fill this newspaper with a compilation of ridiculous things we witness every day. There's absolutely no rhyme or reason for the things we see as we dine, shop and go about our everyday business in our neighborhood. Here are just a few examples of what I'm talking about.

A family comes into a restaurant and sits down at a table. A small child is placed in a highchair and immediately an iPad is placed on the table to entertain him. The mother and father take out their cellphones, and the brother and sister do the same thing. Not a word is exchanged between them. A family of five, totally disconnected, enjoying a dinner outing together.

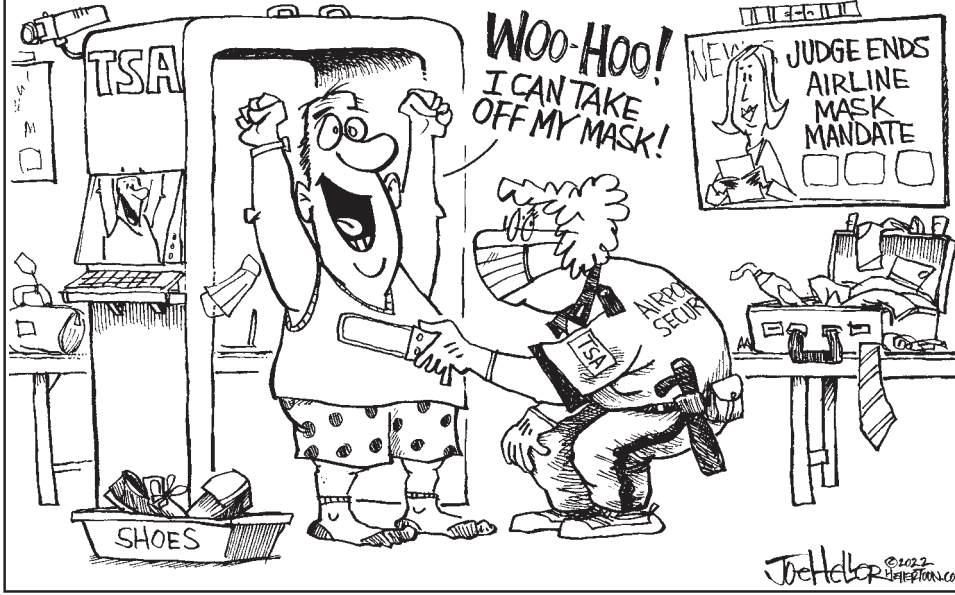
Tattoos are another thing that are very popular today. An Atlanta radio talk show host once commented, "I've never seen a woman yet whose beauty was enhanced by the addition of a tattoo." Sometimes, I feel left out because I don't have a tattoo, but my old skin is so thin that the ink would run everywhere and no one would be able to determine what statement I was trying to make. I'm archaic and untattooable, (new word), but holey jeans! Come on, man. You mean you actually paid money for those jeans that are exposing more skin than they're covering? I had to wear holey jeans when I was young, but they didn't have holes in them when my mother bought them. But, being older, what could I possibly know about style? I usually stay in the car when my wife shops, witnessing people coming and going, tattooed from head to toe, wearing holey jeans that expose most of their body, and texting as they walk being completely oblivious to the traffic piercing by them.

And, let us not forget about body piercing. Stopping to eat some lunch the other day, I got a firsthand look at today's increased demand for body piercing. My waitress was having a little trouble speaking clearly. I couldn't help but notice a fairly large stone strangely located in the middle of her tongue. I tried to imagine paying someone to punch a hole in the middle of my tongue. Both lips were pierced and one eyebrow. And, there was no way to count the additional piercings in her ears without a calculator. One arm was completely covered in tattoos and she was working hard to do the other arm. Being old school, I thought to myself, "She could have started a stock portfolio with what she had spent on tattoos and piercings."

But, what do I know about the things that are trending today? Here's the answer to the question. I'm not going to cover my body with tattoos and I'm not going to walk in heavy traffic while texting on my phone. God has already punched all the holes I need in my body, and I'm not letting anyone add to that number. And, holey jeans!! Surely, you jest.

Gene Vickers

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The Case for Civility

The Case for Civility, Midterm Version - Hands up, anyone whose opinion has been changed by being slammed, punked, embarrassed, humiliated or publicly shamed on social media. I'll wait...

Right. None of us, with the possible exception of those abject apologies coerced from public figures attempting to rescue their peer-dependent careers.

So, what purpose does it serve when we post derogatory things about people, politicians, political parties or x, y and z axis orientations on the internet?

Before we try to answer that, consider this:

Most of our friends, the real ones, not the pixelated ones on social media, already agree with us. Statistically (and sadly, if you ask me) we gravitate almost exclusively toward people who view the world just like we do. When we denigrate people who think differently, we are simply reinforcing our "positionality." (You can look that one up in the urban dictionary.) When we become positional and encourage others to do the same, we are less likely to be open to new information. To put it bluntly, it makes us dumber. Yay team.

In many cases our aggressive negativity also helps to create or reinforce fear, anger and mistrust, which have very little chance of finding a constructive outlet. Unresolved anger can make us feel bad. It can, in fact, make us sick. It can and does spread like a virus.

None of us are completely without responsibility when it comes to encouraging negativity. I spent much of 2016 writing quite disrespectfully (and occasionally, humorously) about two of the most unlikable candidates to ever run for the presidency. I had hoped to contribute in some small way to the erosion of the great cults of personality that seem to form around our leaders and our celebrities. But as we will soon see, many of us are conditioned to take a long list of things very personally these days.

Baked into our political paradigm is a logical fallacy called the "false dilemma," and over the last thirty years the false dilemma of the two-party system has made us subject to manipulation through controlled opposition. Thus, some things never change, no matter which party assumes control.

But something very interesting happens between the horns of this dilemma. As the political campaign progresses and contenders are eliminated, the survivors begin to take on a mantle of respectability among their respective supporters which is often completely divorced from the facts. Why? Because we become personally invested in the IMAGE of the candidates, and when those images are attacked, we take it personally. We feel like WE have been attacked.

Meanwhile, the candidate we do not support becomes a straw man (or woman), and that negative image is reinforced by rumor, innuendo and outright deception.

By the end of the campaign, we have two candidates and four illusions running for one office: one chimeric, and one straw man for each candidate, and millions of people have come to either personally identify with or vilify those images. When one of these illusions finally wins the election, some of us will never again see the real person or the real effects of their actions as an elected official. We see them through the filters of our altered perception.

We desperately need a more mature understanding of what happens in and around Washington. Scratch the surface of the headlines and there is another story about the differing goals and philosophies of the companies that control our leadership. Time Warner, Disney and Verizon, for example, have a very different worldview than Exxon-Mobile and the energy giants. Beneath that, when we look at the companies which contribute heavily to both Democrats and Republicans, we see another story. For example, the bankers that were heavily represented in the Obama Administration remained during the Trump years, and some are still active in the Biden Administration.

If Goldman Sachs can work equally well with Democrats and Republicans, we would be wise to ask ourselves, what purpose might be served by driving a wedge between two evenly balanced factions of the voting population?

The answer to that will probably be found by observing where wealth has accumulated over the last 30 years - and where it has diminished.

The final questions for today are these: When we pass along an attack meme, click "like" and "share," (which for many of us is the extent of our engagement in the political process), when we insult or denigrate someone with whom we disagree, are we helping to drive deeper the wedge that divides our country? Most assuredly. Also, if we were receiving, rather than giving, a medicinal dose of truth, would we prefer that to be in the form of a lozenge flavored with civility - or a suppository? Let the Golden Rule apply.

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry

worldoutsidethebox.com

Chicken Eggs

Many people want to buy locally grown or raised products. Chicken eggs are a great product to buy that's been locally grown. Sometimes the local eggs you purchase may not look exactly like the ones that you find in the store. And that's ok, most likely they're still very good eggs. Let's talk about some of the differences that you might see.

Eggs should be gathered from the coop at least 3 times a day. Cracked table eggs should be separated from the rest. Cracked and leaking eggs should not be consumed. Bacterial contamination is one of the main concerns with eggs. Cracked or leaking eggs could have contamination.

You may run across some eggs that are odd shaped. Store bought eggs will be graded for uniformity. Local grown eggs will have less uniformity, but each egg shows some of the personality of the hen that laid it. Each hen will generally lay the same size and shape of egg. Eggs that are an odd shape are ok to eat.

Some eggs may have some blood on them. Bloody eggs normally come from hens that have just started laying eggs. Simply rinse the blood off and the eggs are ok to eat.

You may come across eggs that are extra-large. These could be double yolk eggs. Double yolk eggs have 2 yolks in them. These eggs would be graded out at the grocery store, but they are fine to eat.

Eggs come in a variety of colors. The color is generally dependent on the breed of hen. Taking a look at the earlobes on the hen can be an indicator of the eggs that hen will lay. Hens with lighter colored earlobes produce lighter colored eggs, hens with darker earlobes produce darker colored eggs. Some eggs may even come out with bands of different shades. This is because 2 eggs were close together in the shell gland pouch. Eggs of different color are ok to eat.

Speckled eggs are just from extra calcium deposits. This could be from extra calcium in the hen's diet, or the egg shaping calcification process was disturbed. Either way, these eggs are ok to eat.

You may see some deposits in the eggshell. This is from improper nutrition or from an older hen, these eggs are ok to eat.

Wrinkles come from older hens or a hen that was disturbed while laying. These eggs are ok to eat.

Soft shell eggs can be from a dietary deficiency, heat stress, or too much salt. Soft eggs should not be eaten if they are cracked.

Another common question about eggs is should they be washed and refrigerated. Eggs will keep for about 3 weeks if they are unrefrigerated. If they are refrigerated they can last up to 15 weeks. They should be refrigerated below 45 degrees. Eggs should be washed with water that is warmer than the temperature of the egg. If the water is colder it causes the egg white to shrink potentially drawing in bacteria like salmonella. Don't wash eggs with dish soap or scented cleaners as this can affect the taste of the egg.

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

UGA extension
 TOWNS COUNTY
Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Habitat for Humanity

Our Helping Hands Program is a huge part of what we do here at Habitat for Humanity. We have helped over 11 families with repairs and accessibility needs in their homes this year alone and we are just getting started! The need in our community is a huge one and we are so happy to be a blessing in these homeowner's lives as we help them make their homes safe, and efficient to their personal needs.

We recently helped S. Kelley with some needs in her home. Seeing her needs met and her worries gone is what this program is all about. She wanted to publicly state, "I would like to thank the Habitat for Humanity for everything they have done to help my family and I in a difficult situation. Without them we would not have been able to get our home repaired. They were compassionate caring and considerate of our situation. We could not possibly thank you enough for everything you have done. The Habitat for Humanity is such a vital part of our community - they really help those in need. If you are in need, please reach out to them - they are such a wonderful program and more than willing to help."

S. Kelley is just one of many people in our community that needed our assistance. Our neighbors need a helping hand and Habitat is blessed by our community through volunteers and charitable donations to help afford the resources needed to repair and sustain these homes for homeowners in need.

Interested in our Helping Hands program? Stop by and fill out a Helping Hands application so that we can begin the process of meeting you and determining how we can help you, your family, and your home. Once an application has been filled out then you will meet with Charlotte Randall our Executive Director here, and she will discuss with you our resources and opportunities. Then Charlotte will gather necessary information and volunteers that have offered to help with Helping Hands projects. Then Habitat volunteers and employees come out to your home and get the job done.

Some of the home repairs we have done but are not limited to, include ramps, floor repairs, roofing repairs, siding and wall repairs, heating unit installations etc. If some of these needs sound applicable to you or someone you know please stop by for an application, and if you're not sure contact us we can answer questions you have on the Helping Hands program and the process. We are located at 225 Wellborn St. Blairsville, and you can contact us at 706-745-7101. We look forward to hearing from you!

Habitat Happenings
 Madelyn Bailey



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.

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Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546