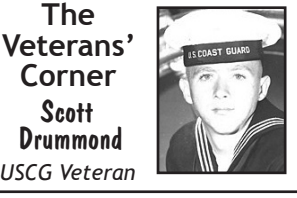


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Wayne Mason, Patriot

Part I:
From a lifelong friend and family member: I grew up in Stone Mountain, GA on 66 acres of land, grew crops, tended pigs, chickens, a cow and mule, worked hard, had a good childhood. Went to Stone Mountain High School, graduated in 1970, Stone Mountain was like a version of what we think of as Mayberry back then, good Christian folks that loved their community and neighbors. Graduated from DeKalb Tech in 71 with a certificate in Diesel Technology, Started as a trainee working on big Trucks at a firm in Atlanta, by Aug. 72 I had advanced to a B mechanic, A being the highest they had. Late August 72 I received my draft notice to report Oct 4th, I was sent to Fort Jackson South Carolina for Basic Training. Two rules I learned in the Army, were NEVER volunteer for anything, because it ain't what you think it will be, and never drop out of formation while running PT. I still remember those sweat soaked days of running up " Drag Ass hill" at Fort Jackson. That's really what they called it! I qualified Expert with my M16 and Grenade throwing. Due to my test scores on entrance, I was also offered training options, Airborne Ranger, EOD, [dismantling bombs], and OCS .[officer candidate school,] I wasn't jumping out of a perfectly good airplane, I don't like bombs, and refused to enlist for a third year in order to do OCS, Oh Well.



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran

December 1972, Fort Sill Oklahoma Advanced Individual Training, Artillery School, I learned how to load, fire, clean and maintain every Howitzer the Army had from a 105mm towed unit to the 8 inch gun that shoots a 200 lb projectile. There is no way to describe how LOUD those big guns are without actually experiencing it in person!! It was COLD there too, one time we had a class A [hot!] meal served to us in the field, and the milk cartons were frozen.

February 1973 , we just knew we were all headed for Nam but with the pull out of troops by Nixon and the cold war with the Soviets, I was sent to Germany for the remainder of my Enlistment. For the next twenty months I was assigned to the 6 BN, 14th Field artillery unit in Zirndorf, Germany. later we moved to Nuremberg. I got lucky the day I got there, the PSNCO needed a driver, I was it, I was also the Alt, Sergeant Major's, the Major and Lt. Colonel's driver as well as Alt Mail clerk, I Stayed busy!

We had Alerts quite often to prepare for an attack from the Soviets, we were on high alert many times, It wasn't war but very close at times, I got to travel on leave in Europe a few times, England, Switzerland, Berchtesgaden , and Berlin.

I flew into West Berlin for three days , the Czech border was still up, the Soviets enforced it with everything they had, we toured the border, witnessed many Crosses posted along the border, we were told each Cross represented someone that was shot by the Soviets, trying to escape to the freedom of the West, it was shocking! They offered a tour to the Soviet side, a Russian Communist soldier with an AK 47 on each bus, ordering them where to go, I didn't take that tour! - *Semper Paratus*

Letters to The Editor

Thank You

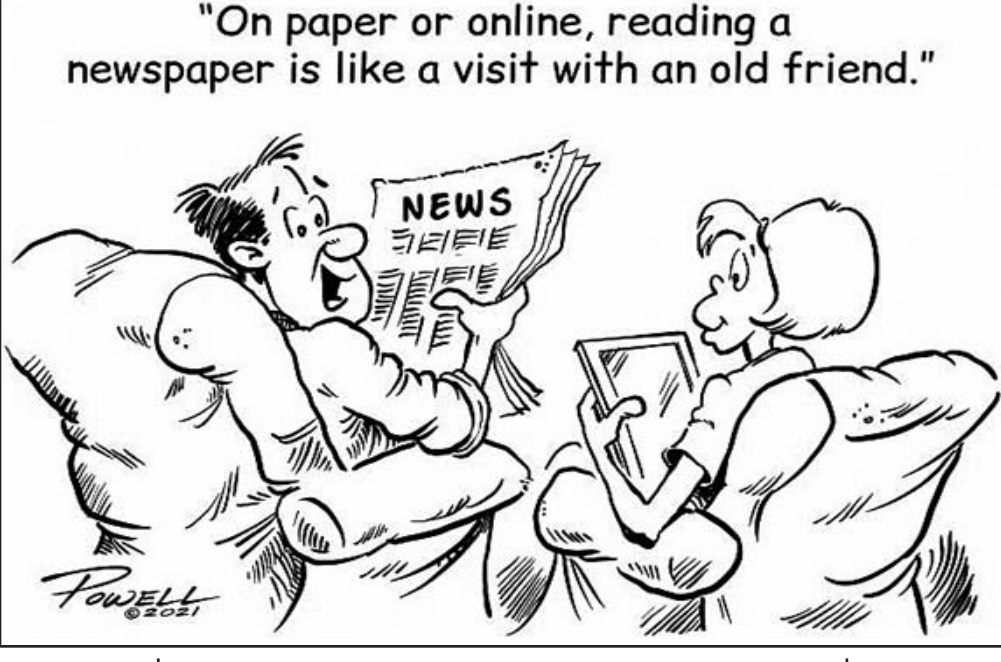
Dear Editor,
The Friends of the Libraries of Towns County (FOLTC) send the Towns County Herald their appreciation and sincere thanks for the excellent service and coverage of the library book sale. The honor system book sale worked beautifully. Thank you for your continued support of our libraries.
Sincerely,
Judith W. Lee, FOLTC Corresponding Secretary

Sports

Dear Editor,
I'm a sports fan, especially football, both college and professional. My brother-in-law was a star at Clemson University in the late 40s, after serving his country in WWII. He went on to play with the Green Bay Packers and Dallas Cowboys. Fred Cone later started a recruiting program at Clemson as he is a legend there. Fred recruited at Clemson for a number of years because he believes in players not only for their talent, but also their instinct to be good citizens. He is 95 now and still instilling those ideals. What has happened to the present day pro players, showing greed, child-like attitudes, disrespecting our nation, etc? Have they forgotten their fans who are ordinary, law-abiding, patriotic folks, who put the players where they are? Are the players killing the goose that laid the golden egg?
Dale Sissell

All Three

Dear Editor,
Public confidence and trust in the validity of election results is key to increasing voter participation. Americans deserve a fair and accurate election process. This means not only making sure that every eligible individual is able to vote, but that his or her vote is not stolen or diluted through fraud. The Democrats "For the People Act" (H.R. 1/S. 1) unfortunately would both enable and increase fraud.
H.R. 1/S. 1 would sabotage state voter ID laws, which currently combat impersonation and voter registration fraud, duplicate voting, and voting by ineligible individuals like illegal aliens. Under H.R. 1/S. 1, someone could simply sign a statement in which they claim to be who they say there are. This would be on top of allowing same-day voter registration. The combination of these two policies that H.R. 1 outlines would open the door for massive fraud. The bill would also require automatically registering individuals to vote who partake in government programs such as receiving welfare or obtaining a driver's license. This would automatically enroll ineligible voters such as illegal aliens who take advantage of government programs. In addition, it limits states ability to verify eligible voters and remove ineligible voters from registration rolls.
In addition to these dangerous policies, it would turn the Federal Election Commission into a hyper-partisan body. Currently the FEC is bipartisan, with six members (three from each party). H.R. 1 / S. 1 would reduce the number to five, giving one political party a majority and the opportunity to essentially rig elections in their party's favor.
Sometimes legislation proposed by Congress is bad policy, sometimes it is unnecessary, and sometimes it is unconstitutional. "For The People Act" includes policies that are all three.
Penny Johnson



The Wheel Turns

We honored our mothers this weekend past, and for those of us fortunate to have them with us, it was an opportunity to embrace the moments we can still share. The rest of us honored the devotion and sacrifice of the women who gave us life, and the memories we cherish.

I am of the latter group. My own mother went on ahead 12 years ago, though it seems like yesterday. My father followed her a short five years later, and the exodus of their generation has left us, ready or not, with the responsibilities they carried so honorably. They take with them the living memory of struggles and triumphs and a history that we would do well to consult today.

As I viewed the headlines this weekend through a historical lens tinted by nostalgia, I imagined my parents and so many of their contemporaries who have also departed, alive to read those same headlines, and it seemed to me that in some ways, each generation departs just in time. My grandfather, who brought memories of the late 19th century into the modern age, who lived as a pioneer in a time when survival hinged on small communities of the self reliant, grieved late in life over the changes he saw in his beloved mountains. He was spared the sight of our unbroken ridgelines replaced by picture windows framed in floodlights, but some of his last thoughts on the subject were prophetic when he said, "One day rich men will fight each other over these mountain tops, but don't judge them too harshly. That's the closest to heaven some of them will ever get."

My parents were spared the pandemic. At a time when their circle of friends and family had diminished almost to a point, they did not have to suffer further isolation and privation, nor the crushing waves of fear and anger swept along by the fear and anger business. They both spent their careers in the health industry, and I can only imagine the frustration they would have felt in witnessing the conflicted and disjointed response of their children and grandchildren to the kind of challenges their generation and those before took in stride.

When we look for a historical context for our present pandemic, the best candidate would be the Asian Flu Pandemic of 1957. That virus was more infectious and had about the same mortality rate as our current nemesis. Yet the 1957 pandemic was overcome within a year by a combination of common sense, personal responsibility and immunizations. Society was reinforced by a stronger fabric of faith and family life, and the nation was not so weakened by the fragile and the entitled, or the polarizing lens of partisan politics that diminishes us today.

Humanity does not learn from the past. My personal read of history leads me to this inescapable conclusion. Science advances, yes. We reach for the stars and into the innermost regions of matter itself, but the quality of our characters seems to retreat as technology moves forward. Rugged individuals guided by faith and accountability are yielding to a culture of libertines in a civilization alternately herded and stampeded like cattle by their fears and addictions.

All is not lost. The people who showed up for dinner on Mothers Day, the people we work with, the people we see at church and in school, are not the doomed and depraved that break the news. The fabric of integrity and accountability is frayed, but it is not yet torn. We've made some mistakes, culturally, politically and personally, but decisions that lead to hard times create character, which leads to better decisions, and the wheel of history turns...

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
P.O. 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 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.

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.

Galls

Today I am going to talk about insect galls. I've gotten several questions from people that have seen something



Watching and Working
Jacob Williams

strange looking growing on their plant, and they wanted to know what it is. Galls can make a leaf look alien, but they rarely harm the tree. Let's talk about some of them, what causes galls, and the damage that they do to a plant.

Insects usually cause galls. They look like an extra growth or tumor on the plant. They can take a variety of colors and shapes. Use of pesticides is not recommended in most cases to treat galls. Most pesticides will be ineffective because the insect or disease causing the gall is inside the plant.

Oak apple galls are somewhat common. These galls form on oak trees. They look like round balls that are attached to the oak leaves.

They start out green, but turn brown, and are about half an inch to 2 inches in diameter. Oak apple wasps cause these galls. Oak apple wasps are really small wasps. These small wasps are not dangerous to people and won't hurt you. Inside the gall is a single wasp larva. Once the larva emerges the gall will turn brown, and you can probably see the hole where it emerged, if the gall is still intact.

Azalea leaf gall is another fairly common gall. This one is not caused by an insect, but is a fungal disease. The disease overwinters inside the plant. Then in the spring and summer, you'll start to see whitish swollen tissue appearing. That tissue has spores that can be moved to other leaves or plants by rain or wind. Fungicides are not an effective way to treat azalea leaf gall. If you see one of these galls, just pick it off and throw it in the trash, which will reduce its spread. Azalea leaf gall can also infect rhododendrons.

Maples can have a couple of different types of galls. One of those is called maple eyespot gall. A midge causes it. A midge is a really small insect. These insects will lay their eggs on the underside of leaves. The eggs hatch and the larvae feed on the leaf from inside the gall. The hormones that the midge injects into the leaf causes a dark red ring to form that has a yellow inner ring and a dark red center. The baby midge will then drop to the ground and finish growing into an adult. These galls rarely do real damage to the tree. Using an insecticide to treat is not recommended because the midge is protected inside the gall.

One type of gall that is problematic for farmers is phylloxera. This louse like insect will feed on roots, which causes roots to swell and die. One of their favorite plants to feed on is grape. Nowadays grapevines are grafted onto a rootstock that is resistant to phylloxera insects. Phylloxera is native to North America, so our native grapes like muscadine and fox grape are resistant to it. However, European grapes are not. In the mid 1800s, some American vines were shipped to Europe that were infected with phylloxera. The arrival of phylloxera in Europe and other countries around the world nearly destroyed the wine-making industry. For the vineyards that did not die, they had to rip out their vines and replace them with ones that were grafted onto resistant, American rootstock.

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

The Height of Fashion

Allow me to preempt this musing with unsolicited advice. At the first hint of a hole in the leg of work pants, patch it. A stitch in time saves knees.

With interest rates at an all time low, Adam and Eve made a bid on a beautiful piece of property, that was to die for, known as The Garden of Eden.

The Lord of the Manor (I mean no offense to anyone) accepted the offer with a few provisos attached. Adam and Eve being only human, actually the only humans, had feet of clay. When the transgression of hiding from The Lord was committed, they pleaded that the shame of their nakedness made them do it. After all, the other garden occupants were covered with hair, feathers, hides and/or fur. Oh, and scales. No wool was pulled over the eyes of the judge but forgiveness prevailed and no banishment was sentenced...this time. Large fig leaves for strategic placement were issued to the guilty with a stern warning not to try that stunt again. And thus began the wearing of clothes.

The history of clothing fashion is long and varied. Just look at Fred Flintstone and George Jetson. Garment fabrication has used leaves, grass, hides, bark, metal, chemicals, jewels and combinations of each to create everything from papal robes to thong underwear.

Protection from the elements was probably the original reason for covering the body and remains high on the list today.

Denim jeans were always work pants for me. They were dark blue and worn while doing chores. Older denim was sturdier than that being manufactured in the last 15 years or so. Shirts made from older denim shielded arms from briars, scratching cats, dragged against their will, from under the porch, and sunburn.

Jeans of the same denim era allowed crawling, slithering, and scooting with little discomfort and the skin covering the patella was kept intact during knee-walking weeding. Sometime and somehow denim jeans became haute couture and were worn with stiletto heeled shoes and jacked to astronomical prices.

My "real jeans" held out like troopers but alas, all good things must end. Pot holders taped over the ever growing holes in the knees of my pants did not work. To stay in place, the tape had to be so tight, I feared loss of limb. Ditto with commercial knee pads from Home Depot which insisted on becoming ankle pads every time I stood. At wits' end, I even tried wearing the stalwart jeans backward so my wounded knees had coverage. The distraction of the fit left me not knowing if I were coming or going.

I'll be scouring thrift shops for new old work pants. Wearing heels or even dress shoes with jeans would be like wearing hip-wader boots with a ballgown.

"Please tell me you did not buy those jeans with the holes already in them" my good friend said. "No I did not. I got them the old fashioned way. I earned them" was my retort. If I ever pay for purposely destroyed clothing, go ahead and bury me at Wounded Knee, if my Native American ancestors would let it happen.

Towns County Herald

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