

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Veterans Memorial Wall

Criteria:
1-Exclusively dedicated to friends and families of Honorably Discharged Towns County Veterans who have passed away after January 1, 2012.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



2-Towns County Veteran must have served in: A-US Army; B-US Navy; C-US Marine Corps; D-US Air Force; E-US Coast Guard; USSF.
3-The sponsor, IE, family member or appropriate sponsor must appear in person before our committee and present proof of Honorable Discharge and/or DD-214. In the case of Veterans who served prior to issuance of DD-214 certificate, please bring the appropriate form.
4-Proof of Towns County residency at time of passing (tax records, notarized records, driving license, etc.)
5-Death certificate, reflecting residency in Towns County at time of passing.

A-If your loved one's name is already inscribed upon any of the Memorial walls in our small but beautiful Memorial Park, said Veteran's name will not be re-inscribed.

B-Each year we create a waiting list for those who may not qualify under item #1 above. Thus far this has not been an issue.

C-Inscription will be the Veteran's name and military branch, ONLY.

D- Veteran must have no record of criminal activity.

Our first meeting with family members in 2022 will be at the former Civic Center, 67 Lake view Circle, adjacent to polling HQ, and Courthouse. We will meet with sponsors, family members June 9, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM. August July 7; August 11; and finally September 8; same time frame 10:00 AM-2:00 PM.

Memorial Day Ceremony! Please do not forget that on Monday May 30, 2022 at 11 AM sharp we will honor Veterans who have made the supreme sacrifice with our Memorial Day Ceremony at Towns County Veterans Memorial Park. Hosted by John Harkins, VFW Commander. Our keynote speaker will be Dan Healy, retired US Army Warrant Officer and Quartermaster VFW Post 7807. Our Chaplain USMC Vietnam Veteran Dwight Moss, will deliver our opening and closing prayers. This moving, sacred event as always is organized by VFW Post #7807 and VSOs which include VFW; VFW Auxiliary; American Legion Post#23; American Legion Auxiliary Post#23; American Legion Riders; Sons of American Legion Squadron#23; Marine Corps League Detachment #783. A very beautiful rendition of "Proud to be an American" will be sung by Summer Rahn. May God Bless all our Honorable Veterans and their families! All Veterans and citizens are urged to come!

Cost Of Freedom Tribute! June 3, 2022-June 5, 2022 Towns County will host the "FREEDOM TRAVELING WALL" opening ceremony will be Friday, June 3, at 10:00 AM. Place will be 150 Foster Park Road, Young Harris, Georgia. Everyone is invited. These walls are dedicated and honor our men and women who served in our armed forces from 1945-1975; 1979-1989; 911 TRIBUTE; Afghanistan and Iraq Warrior Tribute; 1990-2012 Patriots. Our County officials and dignitaries will be on hand for presentation. All of our VSOs have been preparing for this momentous event. And Please! We will need volunteers to set up and to break down these many panels. DO NOT MISS THIS INSPIRING AMERICAN EVENT! - *Semper Paratus*

Letters To The Editor

No Pets Allowed

Dear Editor,
Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds has always had a pet policy for the Hamilton Gardens; we do not allow pets in the garden. We do allow pets in the campground on a leash, and they must clean up after them. We used to have pets inside the fairgrounds for the fairs, festivals, etc., but I had a child that got bit by a dog several years ago and Georgia Mountain Fair had to pay all the medical bills, so we had to adopt a policy of no pets allowed.

Hilda Thomason
GMF Manager

Indisputable

Dear Editor,
The recent letter writer pooh-poohing climate warming caused by burning fossil fuels exhibits a head in the tar sands mentality and a bad case of through-an-energy-pipeline tunnel vision. The science on global warming by burning carbon fuels is indisputable. It is not a question of "if" the ice caps and glaciers are melting with each global greenhouse up-tick in temperature. Ice cap-over-glacial melting is measured by satellite tracking. Some argue over how soon coastal sea-rise will inundate major coastal cities, islands and coastlines where most people live. But the only "if" in the equation is if we continue burning greenhouse gasses, then the destruction will be sooner, rather than later. Add Homo sapiens to the list of threatened species extinction and "replacement theory" takes on a new meaning.

In Pennsylvania, known for Standard Oil Corporations' founding of oil extraction and where ex-governor Ed Rendell, 150 years later, lobbies for more oil and gas exploration and production. Rendell, the former Democratic National Committee boss, endorses John Fetterman for next Democratic Senator in favor of oil and gas fracking in their Pennsylvania backyard. Science is Rendell-Fetterman's enemy; their antidote to warming climate change is to pour more gasoline on the fire.

Lance Jobson

Surrendering U.S. Sovereignty

Dear Editor,
The Biden Administration is undertaking the deliberate surrender of our national sovereignty to the World Health Organization (WHO). A meeting is scheduled in late May of the WHO Assembly in Geneva whereby U.S.-proposed amendments will be considered for approval that would alter our own existing International Health Regulations Treaty. The Biden administration's amendments, along with those from several other countries, will be combined to create a new global pandemic treaty. That treaty is set to be adopted in Geneva at the World Health Assembly. The amendments will give the WHO director general the unilateral power to declare a health emergency based on broad criteria that would impose lockdowns, vaccine mandates and other measures. These amendments would make the WHO director general the ultimate authority over what is a "public health emergency" of international concern and dictate how our government and others would respond to it.

What is problematic is the term "public health emergency." This could include not only a viral pandemic, but also a rise in crime rates, climate change, or any other issue the WHO defines as "public health." Such a surrender of "public health" decisions to an international body led by a Chinese-compromised leader is most unacceptable under any circumstance. It is especially true given the WHO's appalling record of subordinating sound public health policies to the demands of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that was evident in the COVID-19 pandemic. This is an imminent and appalling surrender of our national sovereignty.

Tim Groza

HERE'S A LITTLE STICK

ON A LITTLE FLAG.

PLACED IN THE GROUND BY A LITTLE GRAVE.

MULTIPLY THAT- AND A LITTLE BECOMES A LOT.



AND A LOT HAVE GIVEN ALL...

TO PROTECT THE FREEDOM YOU HAVE GOT.

SO, TAKE A LITTLE TIME AND THINK OF THEIR SACRIFICE.

BECAUSE A LOT OF LITTLE THINGS ADD UP...



AND A LITTLE THANKS IS NICE.

The Oxen Are Slow But ...

... The Earth is Patient
It's that time of year again. The summer people are here, and summer is a month away. Tourists are touring on, and if you live here, there are places you simply try not to go on the weekend.

It was late Sunday afternoon and we were waiting to turn right onto a divided highway. The migration back to the city was extending our stay at the intersection.

"It doesn't look like anyone is going to give us a break," said my wife, "but we're not in a hurry."

"It's a sign of the times," grumbled the voice in my head, the one that sounds suspiciously like a 6 o'clock news reader, and that gave me pause to consider. Since I had plenty of time to consider, sitting there at the intersection with my blinker on, I considered the following:

For the sake of argument, let's divide most drivers into two main categories: Those who consciously contribute to the safe and efficient flow of traffic - and those who prefer to get where they're going before anyone else, by whatever means necessary.

I think we could apply that taxonomy retroactively to the time when the "drivers" were using oxen to pull their carts, and even before. "I have to get to the market before all the best goods are sold," said an angry driver, laying the whip to his ox. "The oxen are slow, but the earth is patient," said the farmer, shaking his head.

Not too many years ago, an observant driver seeing someone waiting to turn onto a divided highway might have signalled a lane change and yielded the right lane. You may not believe this, but there was a time when many a driver, upon noticing a line of cars behind him while going over a mountain, would have pulled into a turnout as a courtesy. Once upon a time, tailgating was rated somewhere between rude and dangerously aggressive.

We all know that highway courtesy (and what is courtesy but another form of common sense) is about as rare as a white man in a tv commercial, and those of us who have time to consider such things, might ask why.

"City folk," suggested another voice, the one that sounds like Jack Palance's character, Curly, in the movie, "City Slickers." That voice has obviously forgotten the number of years we spent living in cities and jockeying for position on the freeway, but it may have a point.

If you have lived in a city or spent much time on Interstate highways, you know that the level of aggression on those roads is so common that it isn't even considered aggression. More people always means there is less to go around of many of the things we value in the country. There is less space, less privacy. There is less time.

A friend from the city visited for a long weekend. He spends several hours every day on 285 getting to work and back. As he was driving us to dinner one evening, he attached himself to the bumper of every vehicle in front of us, totally oblivious as to why many of those drivers were slowing down and glaring into their rear view mirrors. He wasn't in a hurry. He wasn't angry; in fact, he was chatting away happily during the whole trip. It was simply that his behavior on the road was common, perhaps even necessary where he lives. (Tailgating can be a sign of impatience, but it also prevents the idiot whipping his ox behind you from pulling his cart into the narrow space between you and the driver in front and causing you and all the drivers behind you to slam on the brakes.)

Life moves a lot faster than it once did, and not just in the cities. There are more of us everywhere, even in the country, and we are all conditioned to expect a constant progression of "more and faster," faster cars, faster computers, faster food. We are all a little fast and a little furious, and it seems like we are always running late. A little courtesy would go a long way toward improving the flow of things, but patience is not valued as it once was.

"Time is money," said the merchant while he goaded his ox. "If you run out of money you can make more, but when you're out of time, you can't add a single hour to your life," said the farmer.

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.

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.

Agriculture Laws

Today I want to talk about some new laws regarding agriculture in Georgia. These laws either came out this year or last year. The purpose of me discussing these laws is to make people aware of them. The purpose is not to give anyone legal advice or to state whether I agree or disagree. I just want people to be aware of some of the legislation that has passed into law and the reasoning behind why it was passed.

One bill that was signed into law last year is regarding bee removal from a structure. Basically, this law requires individuals who remove honey bees that are ensconced in a structure to be licensed. The licensing is overseen by the Georgia Department of Agriculture. If the honey bees

are free hanging on a tree or on the side of a building you do not need a license to remove them. If they are inside a wall or a cavity inside the structure, then a license is required. In the past people would call a local bee keeper to remove the colony. However, there have been situations where extensive damage has been done to homes, because removal was not done properly or ethically. The goal of the licensing process is to eliminate that issue. Currently neighboring states don't have laws like Georgia does regarding honey bee removal. However, it is expected that within the next few years they will and some reciprocity of licensing will be established. Right now, we are in an awkward stage because this has been signed into law, but there are very few licensed honey bee removers in the state. Georgia Department of Agriculture is working to get people licensed, so we are in a grace period. The law can be found in Chapter 620-9 of Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia. This law only applies to honey bees. It does not apply to other species of bees, wasps, hornets, or yellowjackets.

A law that was passed this year is regarding elementary agriculture education. Middle and high school students can take agriculture classes already. Starting this fall any local board of education can begin to offer agricultural classes if they so choose. Elementary agriculture classes and teachers would be funded by the local board of education. There was a pilot program for elementary agriculture education that started in 2018 which had 27 schools participate. The goal of elementary agriculture education is to increase agriculture literacy so that people understand where their food comes from. This was House Bill 1303.

The last bit of legislative work that I would like to talk about is what people call the Freedom to Farm bill. This was House Bill 1150. All 50 states have some form of a freedom to farm bill or right to farm bill. The purpose of these bills is to protect farmers from nuisance lawsuits of smells, noises, or other legal practices related to farming. Georgia has had a freedom to farm law, but this new law strengthens it. One of the big changes that this law presents is that lawsuits must be brought by individuals who live adjacent to the farm. The other change is that the lawsuit must be brought within 2 years of the act that it is about. The reason for the changes to Georgia's right to farm bill was to protect farmers from nuisance lawsuits. An example is lawsuits that shut down a hog operation in North Carolina in 2020.

If you would like to discuss these bills more contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Habitat for Humanity

Let's talk about Habitat Homeownership. Here are some of the most-asked questions about our home ownership program

Are the houses free?
No. Our partner families have a 20-year mortgage.

How much is the average mortgage? It depends on a variety of factors. The mortgages are based on what it cost to build the house. We rely on donations and volunteers to keep the cost of the houses as low as possible.

What is the average mortgage payment? The average payment is usually between \$650 and \$750. That not only includes the cost of the house, but also the insurance and property taxes. This number can be affected by many variables, such as the cost of building materials, etc. The percentage rate is 1-3%.

Can Habitat build a house on my land? Yes! We have done this several times. If you are chosen to be a Habitat Partner Family, and already have land in Union or Towns Counties, we can possibly build on the property that you already own, thereby lowering the mortgage cost.

How long does it take from the time I am accepted into the Program, to the time I move into the house? Usually about a year.

Do I need a down payment? Yes. The usual down payment is \$1500. But this is not due until the house is completed, so you have time to save the money.

Do I need good credit? You need REASONABLE credit. The average acceptable credit score is 640. If your credit score isn't quite that high. You can work with one of our credit counselors, who will help you do the things necessary to raise your score.

Do I have to work on my house? We require that each chosen family put in a total of 350 "sweat equity" hours with our program. This can mean that members of your household work on your house, someone else's house, a repair project, or work in the ReStore.

Can I choose the floor plan? Yes! We build either 3- or 4- bedroom houses. We have several floor plans to choose from, so you can pick the one that suits you the best. You also get to pick out cabinets, appliances flooring, roof colors, paint colors, and landscaping (from an approved list of choices). We build a house, but you make it a home

I've never owned a house before, I don't know what's involved. We have a "Family Support" committee that helps all our homeowners, even after the house is completed. You will have a person working with you to answer any questions about home maintenance, and help you solve any problems that may arise. You will have a team of cheerleaders throughout the whole life of the mortgage, helping you have a successful experience.

Where do I start? Stop by the Habitat Office, located inside the ReStore at 225 Wellborn St., Blairsville, GA. If you have any questions, or need help, just call 706-745-7101, and someone will help you.



Watching and Working
Jacob Williams

Outside The Box
By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com



Habitat Happenings
Madelyn Bailey

Towns County Herald

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Publication No: 635540
Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.
Towns County (1 Year) \$30. Out of County (1 Year) \$40. 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
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