

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Tour of Towns - Maiden Voyage

The morning broke with one of those soul-satisfying sunrises. What a backdrop the Blue Ridge Range makes. Though still Spring, the temperatures of the entire week have been above average making it feel more like the Summer Scorcheders of Dog Days.

Around Towns
Dale Harmon



The request for must-see places for the Tour of Towns had its first response. My thrill meter soared. Somebody is reading The Herald (print is not dead) and John and I have a starting point. The adventure will begin as soon as my duties as the PLO (permanent latrine orderly) at Hamilton Gardens are completed.

Armed with paper, pen and plenty of cold H2O, off we set to our Young Harris destination. We were eager and in high spirits. The email from Stacy lauded with interest and fun, what she thought would be just right for Tour of Towns. We wound our way up a pretty, tree-lined road and found The William Holland School of Lapidary Arts. The first things we noticed were the almost filled to capacity parking lot and the number of out of state auto tags. TX, FL, ND, OH, MI and so many more. Apparently many thought this was the place to be. The school was started in 1983 because there were no schools where one could learn lapidary arts, only workshops a few times a year. You may or may not know that lapidary is the art of stone cutting. John and I happened to be visiting the school on the last day of week long sessions and were just in time for show and tell. What a surprise and treat for us! We spoke to students who had taken classes 15 years and students who had just wrapped up their first class. All said they would be back for more. Their enthusiasm made me believe it.

In a cabochon class, an intermediate student presented her work in progress to Jerry Mason, a seasoned instructor. "Oh no, he's going for that black pen again" she shouted. I was afraid something dreadful was about to befall her. The piece looked perfectly fine to me but the expert eye of Mr. Mason caught the flaws in one glance. He Xed them with the pen. Although she grumbled, the student was glad he pointed out the error so it could be repaired. The instructors at the school are top notch and some are international award winners. It was pleasant to visit with them.

Since the school's inception, many new classes (too many to list) and packages have been added. So many in fact, it is now referred to as William Holland Retreat, Inc., a more encompassing and accurate title. You may get a catalog at the Towns County Chamber of Commerce, or better at the school.

This place, this school, is a friendly, happy place. The general atmosphere is welcoming. A sense of both calm and energy prevail. I call that good vibes, Dude.

The Greatest Generation

"The Greatest Generation" is a term created by Tom Brokaw to describe the generation who grew up in the United States during the Great Depression, and then went on to fight in World War II, as well as those whose productivity within the war's home front made a decisive material contribution to the war effort.

Brokaw wrote, "It is, I believe, the greatest generation any society has ever produced." He argued that these men and women fought not for fame and recognition, but because it was the "right thing to do." Their remarkable actions, during times of war and peace, ultimately made the United States a better place in which to live.

Born and raised in a tumultuous era marked by war and economic depression, Brokaw asserts, these men and women developed values of "personal responsibility, duty, honor and faith." These characteristics helped them to defeat Hitler and the Japanese, build the American economy, and make advances in science and implement visionary programs. Brokaw credits the Greatest Generation with much of the freedom and affluence that Americans enjoy today. "They have given the succeeding generations the opportunity to accumulate great economic wealth, political muscle, and the freedom from foreign oppression to make whatever choices they like". Brokaw concludes, "It is a generation that, by and large, made no demands of homage from those who followed and prospered economically, politically, and culturally because of its sacrifices.

These are the true American Heroes and the ideals they represent should be an inspiration to all of us who now enjoy the freedoms that they fought and died for in faraway lands. Many were lost forever in battles in desolate forests or on isolated islands or lost forever in the depths of oceans. When a survivor of this Great Generation leaves this life, they take with them memories and experiences that are gone forever never to be told again. We need to spend time listening to the stories and tales so we can pass them on to our next generation.

Many times I put off visiting one of these walking history books and unfortunately these books were closed before I could make time to go and listen. On September 29, 2015 we lost a member of the Greatest Generation who was my mentor, my teacher, my coach, my supervisor, my disciplinary nary, my advisor, and my friend. He was Frank Montfroy Sr., my Father. He always had something to say to me and his funeral was no exception. He spoke to me while I was at the grave site and this is what I plainly heard: "Danks (me), don't cry for me, be happy! I had the best 93 years that anyone could ask for, I got to grow up on a farm in middle Georgia, play ball, fish, hunt, and learn all about life there. I got to go to the University of Georgia and found the love of my life for 69 years and moved her back to live in the small town where I grew up. I got to join the Army Air Corps and became a B-17 pilot along with my brother, Harley Jr. who was a bombardier on a B-17 that was lost on a bombing raid over the sea near the Netherlands in 1941. We went to war to defend our way of life along with many other brave men and women who left their homes to put themselves in harm's way to defend the country we loved. After the war I came back home and taught returning veterans how to farm and about agriculture, and I had a long career with the Georgia Department of Agriculture. I raised 4 children who made me proud and they gave me 9 grandchildren who I enjoyed more than I did their parents, and the boys were my hay crew until they found out about girls and I lost them. I am in a much better place now with no pain or sickness and I can walk again, and I am still among you to guide and point out things that need doing - just listen. Tell Jaybo that I have a project for him and ask Brad-a-Lou where my chain is since he was the last peckerwood to have it! As I told your mother, those last few months were a "deplorable situation" and now thankfully it's over. I miss all of you, but I didn't want you to see me like I was anymore. I told her to get my clothes because "I needed to get out of here" and I did. I have to go now because Harley Jr and I are going to take Peggy (bird dog) out to see if we can find those coverts that I know are over by the clay pit". Then he said "goodbye Danks, talk to you soon". I said, "PaPa, wait, wait there is so much more I want to ask you", but he was not there anymore! Those of you, who still have the opportunity, don't delay, take the time to talk to your Greatest Generation heroes and listen to their stories before it is too late. They have a lot to tell us and we have a lot to learn from them, because "once they're gone, it's gone forever". This generation of "I want it now and I deserve it" should read (if they can) books on the Greatest Generation and realize that without the terrible sacrifices they made, this generation would not be able to talk about our country like they do, because Hitler and Hirohito would not allow it! This Memorial Day stop and thank a veteran for the way of life we have because of them.

Frank M Riley, Jr is Executive Director Chestatee/Chatahoochee RC&D Council and a proud son of the Greatest Generation.



RC&D
Frank Riley
Executive Director

Chinese Privet

Chinese privet is an invasive weed that grows in leaps and bounds. It is capable of taking over large areas of land. The Georgia Forestry Commission consistently lists it at the top of their Dirty Dozen for nonnative invasive plants. It can become a real problem in wooded areas, especially along wood lines and roadsides. Let's talk about Chinese privet and how you can control it to keep it from overrunning our beautiful mountains.

Chinese privet was originally brought over to the U.S. in the mid 1800s to be used as a hedge. By the 1950s it had taken over entire forests. Privet puts on berries that birds and wildlife eat who spread the seeds and start new plants. Once established, the privet shrub will send up shoots around it to create a dense thicket that will force out native plants.

First, let's talk about how to identify it. Privet is an evergreen, which means that it's a lot easier to identify it during the winter because everything else has lost its leaves. It has thin bark with opposite leaves that are glossy. In early May, it puts on small white flowers that have four petals. It grows as a shrub, but it can grow up into the size of a small tree. The berries that it puts on are small, about the size of your pinky fingernail, and dark blue in color.

So, let's talk about controlling this invasive weed. For starters, it's good to be aware that controlling Chinese privet is not a one and done kind of deal. Repeated applications of herbicide will most likely be required.

Hand pulling is an option only when plants are very small. If the plant doesn't come up easily, it's most likely a lateral shoot off a main plant. In this case, the main plant needs to be removed. A weed wrench is a tool that can make hand pulling of plants more effective, by allowing you to hand pull bigger plants. Brush mulching will level thickets of privet, but because it doesn't remove the roots sprouting will occur. However, that regrowth will be uniform, making it easier to control with herbicides.

The two main herbicides used to treat Chinese privet are glyphosate and triclopyr. There are a couple of different ways to make the application. A foliar application from a sprayer will work if you have a concentrated enough mix. Ready to use mixes are usually not strong enough. The issue with foliar applications is drift. Nearby plants will also be affected by the glyphosate.

A couple of other options are cut stump and basal bark. Cut stump will require a saw for you to cut the plant down to just a couple of inches above ground level. Then apply the triclopyr or glyphosate at a strong concentration using a brush on directly onto the tree where the stump is exposed. It may be beneficial to include a dye spray indicator so that you can tell which stumps have been treated. Basal bark means using triclopyr ester at the base of the plant, spraying the herbicide in a ring on the base. Herbicide treatments work well with controlling privet, but they can still be time consuming. Whenever applying any kind of pesticide always read and follow the label instructions.

If you have questions about privet control contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams

Letters to The Editor

Climate Change Strikes Homes

Dear Editor,

As I sit here at a small condominium on the Atlantic coast in Florida that we have visited for over 30 years, my heart feels very heavy. Our condo complex was devastated by one of the storms that came through 2 summers ago, and though it has been finally rebuilt, I realize that we are likely to have it repeated as storms progressively get worse. The magnificent sand dunes have been almost wiped out, and the high tide eats away at what is left of them, coming progressively a little higher each year. In my lifetime, I suspect the dunes will be gone, and in my children's lifetime, the whole complex may very well be endangered by rising tides. The worst part is that I know this is just a microcosm of what is happening throughout the earth, causing countless millions of people to be displaced from their homes and trillions of dollars of real estate and infrastructure to be destroyed. Wildfires, droughts, and floods will also get progressively worse, according to 97% of climate change experts. Do we want this to be the legacy that we will leave our children? I hope and pray not.

Vernon Dixon, MD

It's Everybody's Problem

Dear Editor,

A few weeks ago I was stopped at a traffic light in Hiawassee, and across the street several cars were lined up waiting for the light to change. In the front car, the woman driver got out, walked over to a muddy hole on the side of the asphalt, picked up trash that had accumulated in the hole, and put it in her car. As she got back in her car, I recognized her. Kudos, Madame Mayor!

Barbara Dawson

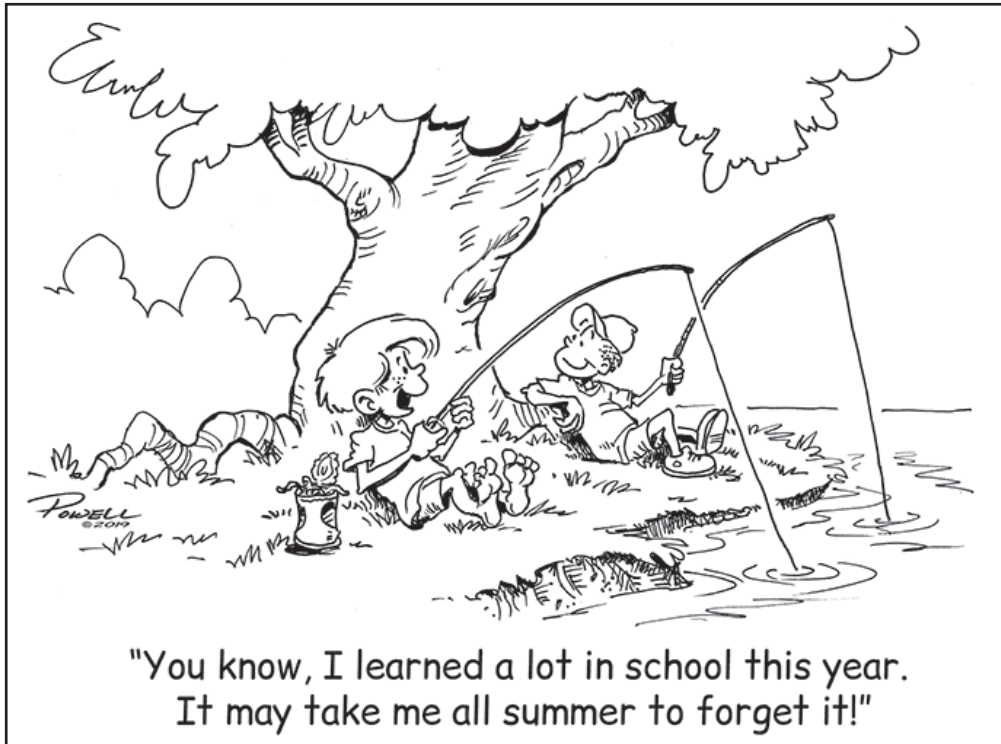
GUEST COLUMNS

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, PO 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 page 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.



Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday: 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
Alzheimer's Supp.	First Tuesday of each month: McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	6 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	First Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	First Thursday of each month: Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month: Clubhouse	6 pm
Republican Party	City 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

Have something to sell?
Let the Herald work for you!

Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM • 706-896-4454

Towns County Herald

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Phone: (706) 896-4454 **Fax:** (706) 896-1745 **Email:** tcherald@windstream.net
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546