

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Bill Powers, Great American

William McCutcheon Powers was born 11 June 1933 in Detroit MI. A Mackenzie HS graduate of 1951, Bill went on to earn a Michigan State University degree in 1955. It wasn't a bought and paid for trip for Bill, as he held various jobs, including pounding dents out of steel forms with a 5 pound hammer; construction laborer; Cadillac Motor assembly line; and in between classes at college he worked in the dish room, delivered 5 gallon bottles of distilled water and loading/unloading wholesale food warehouse trucks.

After college and a stint at collecting receipts for Speedway Petroleum, Bill enlisted in our US Army in May, 1956. Entry into the Army was at Fort Wayne in Detroit, where a multicultural group of recruits including college grads, HS dropouts, and all sorts were greeted with strict discipline and had their knives, guns and other paraphernalia confiscated. Confusion and chaos reigned there, according to Bill, with boot camp yet to come at Fort Leonard Wood, MO. The train ride was less than accommodating with smoke, ash, dust entering into the non-air conditioned passenger cars on the Wabash Cannonball. Boot camp was physically challenging, in a hot, dirty, dusty, rocky environment. After Basic, Bill went on to Army Intelligence Training in Baltimore, MD. He then spent his time in the immense Central Records Facility, where tens of thousands of records on anti-American and other suspicious activities, were kept the old fashioned way in file folders in precise locations. He or any of his cohorts never thought of sharing any of those confidential records with anyone, under severe penalties of law. Very strict laws apply to anyone charged with the security of our nation and confidential or secret document handling procedures.

After Army life, Bill entered into the life insurance business in Detroit, then on to Chicago. Bill met Carol, married and moved back to Warren, MI, retiring in 2005. After visiting the North GA mountains, to see his younger brother, Jim, he and Carol decided there was no better place on earth to live, and have been here in their beautiful home atop a mountain, ever since. Both Bill and Carol are very kind, generous, gregarious wonderful friends. Carol a former teacher, donates time to the Towns County School and Bill donates time for watching over four legged friends at a local rescue shelter. Bill is also very proud of his Scottish ancestry, sometimes wearing a kilt to certain events. They adopt and care for abandoned kitties.

Bill is proud of his brother Byron who also went into the Army after college, serving in Germany, two tours in Vietnam, then attending the Army War and general staff colleges. Colonel Byron Powers served five years at the Redstone Arsenal, overseeing the entire TOW missile system.

As I type this, with tears in my eyes, the angels play bagpipes in heaven for this wonderful Scotsman and true friend who departed us this morning to be with our Lord in Heaven, May 28, 2020 at approximately 8 a.m.

Semper Paratus

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Crabs In a Pot

We won't take up too much of your time this week. We have work to do, a garden to tend and some lumber to saw, and you have already spent enough time worrying about the condition of the world. We'll venture a guess that just outside your door, the world is doing just fine, and that's the place where we need to focus our attention right now.

There's an old fable about crabs which seems fitting in dark of today's headlines. It goes something like this: A bucket of crabs does not need a lid because any crab trying to escape will be pulled down by other crabs also trying to exit the bucket.

For the purposes of our discussion, the "bucket" is the ongoing drama crowding the streets of some of our cities and dominating the pixel narrative. Here is a short list of some of the crabs. First there are the election year crabs which have repeatedly shown that they will use any tragedy to further their goals, no matter the collateral damage. There are media crabs that make their paychecks and maintain their stock prices by feeding us broken news 24/7, and thanks for the hours of "live" video loops of that street corner where someone threw something at a police officer, or might.

There are the drama crabs, addicted to the rush of brain chemicals that accompanies fear and anger and shocking images. Like a drug addict, it feels awful, but at least it feels. Enter the virtue crabs eager to demonstrate their superior morality and lecture you, because if you're not as outraged as they are, you're part of the problem.

Finally we have the crabs overwhelmed by anger and desperation from being crushed at the bottom of the pot for so long and who have given in to the baser animal instincts on the ragged edge of what remains of their humanity. They are a small minority of the crowd, but they are the easiest to manipulate.

Yes, manipulate. There are signs of a chef or two somewhere in this hell's kitchen, turning up the heat, flooding social media with inflammatory posts, organizing the transport of "protesters" hundreds of miles to cause trouble in someone else's city.

Sadly, if we could crawl out of the pot we might be able to see and address the real problems now obscured by violence and stupidity: The persistence of racism, the increasing coercion of the oligarchy, and the long suffering debilitation at the roots of our economy by parasites.

Make no mistake - what forms the "pot" and turns up the heat is economic. The real tragedy is that we will soon be offered the same old false dilemma in an election between more government in support of crony capitalism or more government to coerce a more egalitarian society and redistribute wealth.

Most of us long for a more egalitarian society. That ideal is one of the things that defines our way of life. But neither side of the left/right divide seems to get it. The left thinks the ideal can be coerced by government and having achieved that, a healthy economy will follow. The right correctly believes that a rising tide of economic health will lift all boats, but they deny the existence of oligarchy busy drilling holes in all the smaller boats.

Perhaps saddest of all, despite the parasites and the drillers of holes and the crab mentalities, across the board, most of the things being protested were improving. The numbers are clear on that, but truth takes a back seat to narrative in this world.

If you're reading this, chances are that you enjoy the luxury of being able to choose not to be pulled into the crab pot. Spend time in gratitude every day for that blessing. Focus on what is real and right in front of you, your family, your friends, your community. Nurture these, strengthen these and do what you can to insulate them from the heat of the crab boil.

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.

The Middle Path
By: Don Perry
onthemiddlepath.com

Black Bears

Black bears are out and about. While people enjoy hearing them around, it's important to remember that these animals are wild. Interactions with bears are inevitable to a certain level, so let's talk about what to do if you see a bear and the steps that you can take to make sure that your home doesn't become a playground for bears.

Firstly, it's important to remember that we live in an area with copious amounts of national forest. That means black bears are out there. Hopefully, though if you encounter one you'll know what to do or how to make your space less attractive to them. Bears will typically live 8 to 15 years. The females can weigh up to 300 pounds and the males over 500 pounds. The females will give birth in their den in late January. Those cubs will stay with the mother until the following spring when she kicks them out.

Bears are omnivores meaning that they eat whatever is easily available depending on the time of year. Their natural diet is berries,

fruits, acorns, grasses, insects, and even mammals. Bears can be attracted by the smell of human food if there is not much natural food available for them. Bears are naturally afraid of humans. However, bears that have been feeding on human food lose their natural fear of people, and become a danger. Bears will usually remain in an area where food is readily available, so the best way to make sure that bears don't move into your backyard is to remove the sources of food.

Never feed bears either intentionally or unintentionally. They will learn where food is available and become a nuisance for you. Make sure that your garbage is in a place that they can't reach. That means leaving it inside the garage or if you're out camping hoisting your trash in the air or putting it in a bear proof trashcan. Bird feeders can attract bears because of the high calorie content in bird feed. Bring your bird feeders in when bears are active.

Usually by the time bears are active there is plenty of natural food available for them. Don't leave pet food out. Just give your outdoor pets enough food for one feeding. If you have a grill, clean and store it after use. Bears will be attracted by the smell of your grill so keep it out of reach for them. And finally, let your neighbors know if you see a bear so that they can take precautions too.

Most bears are not aggressive, unless they have been fed by humans before. Bear relocation is usually not an effective control option. Bears that are relocated might be moved to an area that another bear has already claimed, leading to territory fights, or the bear may try to return to its home and be struck by a vehicle. Relocation is a last resort.

If you do encounter a bear in the open make yourself look big and wave your arms and shout while backing away slowly. Do not get between a mother bear and her cubs. If you are attacked fight back aggressively with anything you can get your hands on. Bears can be dangerous but know that there are no recorded fatalities in Georgia.

If you have questions about bears in our area contact your local Extension office for more information or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Letters to The Editor

The Question of Why

Dear Editor,
In response to a recent letter writer in TCH asking the question of why the US ranks so high in COVID cases and deaths worldwide, let me offer an answer: The other countries aren't stuck with New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. You know; the states that send known COVID positive patients into nursing homes.

Jim Soltys

COVID-19 Death Rate in U.S.

Dear Editor,
In one of the letters to the editor last week, the writer wanted to know why the U.S. has so many reported deaths related to COVID-19 when compared to the rest of the world. While it is correct that our country has more reported COVID-19 deaths than the the rest of the world (as of May 25), these numbers change dramatically when we look at the cases per capita. The U.S. actually ranks 9th in the world when we look at the coronavirus death rate per million people. When that is done, the U.S. has a rate of 288.74. Belgium ranks first with a rate of 791.76. These figures are derived from the Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University. It does make a difference. The U.S. drops from first to 9th when you adjust for population. It should also be noted that several countries are undercounting coronavirus deaths, including China, Iran, and Russia. It's very possible that the actual death numbers for these countries are much higher, possibly even putting them in the top ten, but without reliable data it is impossible to surmise. It should also be noted that within the U.S. a coronavirus death is recorded even though an underlying condition may have contributed more to the death than the coronavirus.

Tim Groza

A Critical Time

Dear Editor,
We are at a critical time in our Nations History. The Federal Government now has absolute over, "We the people" in every way imaginable. "We the people" of our Sovereign States can change the role of Government back to a limited form of government that our Founding Fathers and the US Constitution designed. Although only a few people have the grit, courage, and stamina, to do so.

Larry Morgan

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

Perks

Greetings and salutations, Townies and Visitors. That you're reading and I'm typing is a gift to us all.

Not because I'm the Bard of Blue Ridge to which you are privy, but because we can.

We can, in a time when thousands and thousands recently can't anything.

Having a column published on the Opinions and Commentary page of the Towns County Herald does not bring any monetary compensation. And surprisingly, there have been no offers for product endorsements.

In fact, much time, energy, and frustration have been spent trying to be cute, interesting, or informative even when feeling none of those. I am, however, given a platform to opine on many topics and issues. More often than not, that's enough.

The hospitality industry, which John and I happily chose, is multifaceted. Food allergies, pillow preferences, room temperatures and a myriad of other creature comforts are but a few of the infinite duties and obligations we assume to entertain guests.

Paying taxes and fees, procuring licensing, and obeying industry laws are the criteria we meet for doing business in wonderful Towns County, GA.

Along with the tangible comforts to our guests, there is what I call atmospheric comfort. When asked, in company, my religious or political leanings, my pat reply is "I'm an innkeeper". I want no guest to feel like the only jackass on an alpaca farm or the only alpaca on a jackass farm. We are all here, guests and hosts, to enjoy the gorgeous mountains and each other's company. Not to convert or divert.

When Earth was besieged by the pandemic, Together Alone, We're all in it Together, and other unifying phrases, brought hope and comfort but how quickly the tie frayed.

Confrontation now seems more in the fore front than victory over the virus. Federal and State mandates and statutes were, on the whole, observed for their designated duration.

We now have the right and responsibility to follow the course that we as individuals, deem most prudent in combating the scourge. Some, as John and I, have chosen to don masks and maintain the recommended social distance.

It will be required policy for guests and staff of our inn, at the forfeit of much-needed revenue.

Others feel no need for distancing or the use of PPE. News programs have shown grocery shoppers, masked and gloved, breaching social distance by getting practically nose to nose to berate unmasked shoppers.

Some people, bare-faced, seem almost defiant by invading the space of those obviously social distancing.

"We're in it Together" is not just buzz phrase. It is gospel.

Alpaca farm?

Jackass farm?

Let's just not become a field full of goobers.

Health, Happiness, Hope and Civility Around Towns

Around Towns

Dale Harmon



Towns County Herald

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