

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

They Paid it Forward

Many great folks from our community came out to our Civic Center on Monday, May 28 to honor our nation and pay respects to all those who died, "paying it forward" for our nation and for the entire civilized world. This is what Memorial Day represents. Those men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice were indeed paying for what we enjoy each and every day!

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



Rainy weather forced our observance to be moved inside Towns County Civic Center; thus our beautiful Towns County Veterans Memorial Park was unattended, in spite of those several members of every VSO under the roof of VFW Post 7807 combined with Towns County efforts regularly working and upgrading that sacred ground.

Nevertheless our Memorial Day Observance was very inspirational, especially the heartfelt speech given by Al Lipphardt, a many times over combat award recipient and retired US Army Captain. We were truly blessed to meet such a down to earth, warm and wonderful individual who had such a tremendous message and exemplary speaking skills.

We must never forget nor fail to honor those who gave all they had for all of us, and their families who through only God's help have had to suffer those losses in extremely heart-breaking personal ways. Something many of us will never know.

We must bond together, as truly unique Americans and forever do our part to guard and maintain our wonderful America, paid for by the blood and suffering of those who never knew us. Unselfish sacrifice! "Paying it Forward" for all of us. Don't waste it!

Being aware that Memorial Day is a day of remembrance, did you know that our Congress, in December of 2000 established a moment of remembrance?

Called the "National Moment of Remembrance Act", every American is encouraged to stop what they are doing on Memorial Day at exactly 3 PM. If you are driving, toot your horn; take that minute to embed the memory of those who died for us into your heart and soul.

Even Amtrak train engineers have taken to sounding their horns in unison at precisely 3 PM on Memorial Day. Major League baseball games usually stop for that one precious Moment of Remembrance.

Another often ignored historical fact concerning Memorial Day is the date! Why the latter part of May?

The US Department of Veterans Affairs tells us that Union General John A. Logan who served in the Mexican-American and Civil Wars wanted Congress to declare May 30th as "Decoration Day" for citizens to decorate the graves of those killed in combat with fresh flowers, plentiful in late May.

This became Memorial Day, honored each year on the last Monday in May henceforth. This time of May is also believed to be chosen because it was not already the anniversary of any significant battles.

Memorial Day observances all across America are closed with the bugler playing "Taps" at which time many tears are shed by all of us who love America and honor those who honored us with their very lives.

Semper Paratus

May the Circle be Unbroken

On a sunny day in July, a group of adjudicated teenagers in a Wolfcreek Wilderness program were having a blast going down the Chatooga River in canoes.

Two other instructors and I had herded the group of ten down some fairly easy class two and three rapids, and we were relaxing, eddied out in a pool at the bottom of a run.

The kids were not in novices on the water. This trip was a bonus rewarded to a group who had successfully navigated the Okmulgee/Altamaha from Hawkinsville to Darien, Georgia.

This was their first trip to the mountains. All but two were city kids; most from the Atlanta metropolitan area.

At the edge of the pool, a rock cliff rose about 50 feet above us. It was covered with lichens and ferns, and nooks and crannies that were meant to be explored, carefully, by teenage boys.

Unbeknownst to one intrepid explorer, the cranny he eyeballed was currently occupied by a two and a half foot, spring-loaded water snake who did not intend to stay put and be prodded by a canoe paddle.

So he leapt, our snake, and by leapt, I mean ejected, evacuated, and escaped at a high velocity directly at the two threatening eyes now approaching his hideaway.

With the reflexes of youth our lad turns aside just barely in time to narrowly avoid a collision with the serpentine arrow, and with the exuberance of youth he then very determinantly steps out of the canoe and, I swear to you, walks on water a good three steps before sinking in. Into the water. With the snake.

I've never seen anyone moving that fast, or dog paddling that hard, around and around in circles, yelling at the top of his lungs but, we were relieved to see, somehow keeping his head above water.

We quickly got him to ground and calmed down, but I have to tell you something. You just cannot watch a guy jump out of a boat with a snake and then dog paddle in a circle without laughing some. More likely laughing a lot. Right then and there, want to or not. And then again later, and then years later. What has been seen cannot be unseen.

Fortunately the only wounds were perhaps our young friend's pride, and only for a moment. He was quite the good sport about it.

To some Native Americans the snake symbolized transformation. In the Torah and in the Christian Bible the serpent promised wisdom. Among some Chinese there is the belief that the snake represents honor. But as long as you're not the guy who jumped in a pool with a snake, the snake can also represent humor.

A funny thing, though. There are some pretty snaky strokes in the old symbols for karma in Sanskrit, and in the yin and yang of the Taoist.

But in the North Georgia Mountains, judgement is mine, sayeth the Lord, and what goes around comes around.

It came around this very afternoon down by the creek. I was washing my hands at the edge of the water, on hands and knees, and the top of my head was about 6 inches from the rocky bank.

When I looked up, there were two dark little obsidian eyes looking back at me from that same distance. They glared out over a little black tongue darting in and out like it was tasting the air.

I didn't stick around to notice much more, and there must have been some kind of levitation involved in transporting me to the other side of the creek, without my knowledge or permission, that far and that fast.

How quickly a large dose of adrenaline can set the body on automatic, automatic pilot when the snake-to-face comfort perimeter is breached.

The snake never moved, but I certainly did, ejecting and evacuating from the scene, at a high velocity.

So we have come full circle in a way.

Laugh with me now, and help me pay the remaining balance on a laugh-karma loan that has been collecting interest for many fine years.

May the circle be unbroken.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

An Indelicate Incident

He was a vile and terrible man who left the top off the toothpaste (thus breaking the lost 11th Thou Shalt Not), kidnapped and dressed the neighbors' cat in Hot Pants, but wasn't the penmanship on the ransom note beautifully written? If my mother could not find a redeeming quality in a person, there wasn't one. Although President Jimmy Carter, by his own admission and fans are. They spend so much time tending and improving "our" Garden, that they have to wear name tags when they go home so their families will know them. These people should be thanked and revered. Not ill treated.

When we hear or read the words aromas, scents, fragrances, and the like, a pleasant experience for the olfactory sense is formed. On the other hand, words such as reek, malodorous, stink and stench, conjure just the opposite. A recurring act near the Gentlemen's Room at Hamilton Gardens has proven to be at the least, an assault to noses and at most a serious health issue. The act of which I speak is urinating on the wall beside the men's room. At times this has occurred when the door to the room was locked for the night and sometimes when the room was completely accessible. She With Name Not Be Mentioned takes quite seriously and with pride in herself and The Gardens, her duties. She does what must be done with hose and cleaner to rectify an act of total disrespect to all by what must be a sorry piece of plunder. The Hammies and I call the serial urine depositor something unprintable for this publication.

Being a daughter of The South, I was born hearing and have always loved the soothing lilt of our signature accent. While formulating this account in my pea brain (No pun intended. Well maybe), I was reminded of a childhood word often used by my women kinfolk when they needed to call someone a really bad name that was acceptable. The word I heard was scallywag. The word is actually pronounced scallawag. It means scamp, reprobate, or an animal of little value. Scallywag just sounds right to me so I'm using it. My men kin were not encumbered by trying to sound acceptable. That disgusting individual who abases himself at The Gardens is an expulsive, expulsive, expulsive scallywag. All my family bases and the standards of this paper are covered.

I do not know the situation of the person about whom I've just written. There may be uncontrollable reasons for what takes place. If so, I apologize. If not, stop it!

Dishin' Dirt
 Dale Harmon



Letters to The Editor

Is Climate Change a Real Crisis?

Dear Editor,

I write in reply to the letter (May 30) taking issue with my previously stated comments on climate change alarmism. I respectfully disagree with both its premise and scientific assumptions. The notion that the government always "intends to work in our best interest" is refuted virtually every day, as illustrated by the stunning revelations about FBI and Justice Department misconduct in the last election. I am reminded of Ronald Reagan's famous aphorism that the most feared words in the English language are "I'm from the government and I'm here to help you."

As for the science, while there are many real crises in this turbulent world, climate change is not one of them. The earth has been gradually warming since the end of what scientists call the Little Ice Age several hundred years ago. Over the past 150 years average surface temperatures have increased about 1 degree Celsius, well within natural variability. When the climate changes all creatures must adapt, including man. Many factors contribute to climate change, most notably the shifting of the massive ocean currents (known as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation and Atlantic Multi-Decadal Oscillation), solar radiation and electromagnetic activity and the earth's elliptical orbit around the sun. Carbon dioxide (CO2), which is a mere trace gas at .04% of the atmosphere, has never been proven to be a significant factor.

Nor is CO2 a pollutant. Long considered the lifeblood of this planet, plants use CO2 for photosynthesis which produces oxygen for us animals. It is a colorless, odorless gas and should never be confused with smog or particulate pollution. Therefore, hitting hydrocarbon energy companies with punitive taxes as "polluters" would do nothing for the climate and only drive up the cost of energy, hurting the little guy more than anyone else.

While the government exists to perform certain necessary functions, empowering it to go out and stop the climate from changing is a fool's errand and would lead to no end of expense and loss of our freedom. And referring to skeptics of climate change alarmism as "deniers" is not helpful to encouraging open and honest debate about these important public policy issues.

John DiChiara

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



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 EMAILED 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.	Every Friday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Every Sunday: Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	First Monday of each month: 1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
Mtn. Amat. Radio	First Tuesday of each month: McConnell Church	1:30 pm
Alzheimer's Supp.	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
American Legion	City Hall	6 pm
Hiaw. City Council	YH City Hall	7 pm
Young Harris Coun.	First Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
Quilting Bee	First Thursday of each month: Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Stephens Lodge	Second Monday of each month: 1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
Chamber Board	VFW Post	5 pm
VFW	Old Rec. Center	5:30 pm
Historical Society	Civic Center	7 pm
Planning Comm.	Auditorium	7 pm
School Board	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Second Tuesday of each month: Senior Center	1:30 pm
Gem & Mineral Club	Calvary Church	4 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Lions Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club		

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Towns County Herald

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