

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Compassion Among Warriors

Compassion Amongst Warriors part 2: As Charlie Brown and his crew waited the gunfire from the Garman Messerschmitt fighter who was tailing them in position for ending the already mortally shot up B-17, they crossed the coastline and were out over the North Sea. Then in amazement they realized the German fighter was still with them and had no intent on opening fire! They were being escorted! As they were away from Germany the fighter slid back in to position close alongside them, as they looked at each other, the German pilot raised his hand and saluted them, then pulled away, and guided them all back east.

Almost a miracle, Brown managed to land the B-17 at the airbase of the 448th Bomb Group near Norfolk in East Anglia. Brown and his whole crew except for the tail gunner survived. At the debriefing the decision was made to not divulge what occurred as to keep this entire episode a secret for everyone's sake.

Charles Brown went on to college and re-enlisted in the USAF in 1945, serving until 1965 and retirement as a colonel. Only in 1986 at a meeting of retired combat pilots called "Gathering of the Eagles" did Charlie Brown tell this amazing story of the honorable German pilot that saved their lives in December of 1943. Naturally he was questioned as to the validity of such an unheard of tale.

Brown searched for the German pilot for four years, finally receiving a letter from Franz Stigler, now in Canada, confirming that he himself was the pilot who escorted them to safety back then.

Stigler's initial intent was to add another kill to his already twenty-seven kills as an ace fighter pilot. As he was refueling his also damaged Messerschmitt Bf 109 fighter on the ground, he spotted the wounded B-17 overhead and decided to go for the kill. However once Stigler reached the American bomber, he saw the condition they were in and could not bring himself to shoot them down. Actually Stigler wanted them to surrender, as they posed no fighting ability. Upon seeing their refusal to set down in German territory he made the decision to escort them to safety away from any further German aggression.

Stigler too kept what had happened a secret, as the high command in Germany would have executed him had they known. He left Germany for Canada in 1953 and started a successful business when he learned of Charlie Brown living less than 200 miles away from his own home in Vancouver, British Columbia, and Brown in Seattle, Washington. After meeting one another they became best of friends often visiting one another and telling of their stories often.

In 2008 they both passed away within months of each other.

Even in war, with what men are forced to do, often they find courage, honor, humanity and compassion. I believe most of our Honorably Discharged Veterans, combat or non-combatants share those traits. - *Semper Paratus*



"You know, with this new Father's Day shirt the kids gave me, I don't mind wearing a mask in public."

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



The 5 or 6 or 7 Stages of Grief

In the old days, time healed all wounds. They say life is more complicated today, though I suspect life is the same and it is the living that has become more involved.

With Elizabeth Kubler Ross came a five-step pathway through grief: Denial, anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. In recent years, shock was added as the first stage of grief, which makes six, and in some lexicons, guilt is inserted somewhere between denial and anger, bringing the total to seven.

Apparently, psychology does not escape the Second Law of Thermodynamics either, but we're not here to talk about grief, though it does grieve me to say that when it comes to the demise of quality in goods and services, I'm stuck somewhere between shock and denial.

Our story begins with the arrival of a new Craftsman air compressor. I had been looking for something that wouldn't make my ears bleed but didn't need to cycle after two or three finishing nails.

The ad looked great, as ads often do, but like most of us, I viewed it with suspicion. The reviews were great, and there were many. Reviews are also suspect, as some are written by company employees. In the end it was the price, the reviews and the word, "Craftsman" that sealed the deal.

In retrospect, I should have known better than to give too much credence to the name. Sears sold Craftsman to Stanley Black and Decker in 2017. Do you ever wonder if, when one company buys another company that the former retains any of the memories and characteristics of the latter? Is it like the Borg on Star Trek? Does Craftsman remember its glory days and wish it made quality tools, but is powerless under the influence of the collective? Resistance is futile. You will be assimilated.

My dad's 1970s Craftsman tools hang proudly in my shop, a reminder of the American quality and ingenuity that was, but the "Craftsman" that arrived on my front porch was made in China for Stanley Black and Decker Acme Coyote.

The first clue that something was amiss was a strange and unpleasant odor that filled the shop as soon as the box was opened, and the compressor removed. "Did Bonnie get hold of a skunk?" My wife asked me. "No, I think it's the air hose that came with this compressor." I replied. "You have to take that outside. I can smell it all the way into the den."

The nasty skunk smell was probably dibutylphthalate, a plastic stabilizer commonly used in plastics from The People's Republic. Do they use that in everything or does the Chinese government decree that it must be used in all plastics shipped to the US? Enquiring minds want to know. What I do know is that the chemical is a hormone disruptor and potentially very unhealthy for susceptible people. I also know that the plastic skunk smell is not an early indicator of quality in a manufactured product.

I put on a pair of gloves and took the little hose out to the truck and threw it in the back, briefly wondering how something so thin could ever expect to survive the 150-psi advertised for the compressor. After two days in the bright sun, you can still smell it when you walk by the truck.

Back in the shop, I noticed a little bag of trinkets which had fallen onto the floor. This turned out to be the "accessories" which were included as a bonus. I marveled for a moment at the photographic and pixel prowess required to make the trinkets look like the serious tools shown in the ad. They did not stink, so I tossed them into the garbage bin in the shop.

The compressor worked fine, right out of the box. It seemed loud to me, but perhaps Craftsman Stanley Black and Decker Acme Coyote measures "decibels" on a different scale.

On the plus side, I'm predicting the unit will be tough enough, judging from the fact that it arrived undamaged in the beat up box so often produced by the Amazon warehouse/UPS gauntlet between the last click online and our rural location. For the price and the apparent quality, I'll feel comfortable tossing this unit on the back of the truck without the TLC I would reserve for a finer tool like an Ingersoll Rand. Sometimes it's an advantage to have a semi-disposable "beater" tool.

Which brings us back, briefly, to the five, or six, or seven stages of grief that some of us feel over the demise of quality in the world. I'm shocked that a hundred-dollar bill has so little value, and no, I'm not giving any away.

I'm in denial that our currency has lost so much of its purchasing power. I'm angry that we all watched it happening right under our noses and were unconcerned. I'm bargaining in my head that this piece of junk is a "good" thing for banging around in the back of my truck. The whole affair could be quite depressing.

To achieve acceptance, I had to do a bit of math. Thank God for math, and logic, and reason, more valuable in their current scarcity. Here are the numbers that led me to understanding.

If price is still a relative guide to quality, to get the quality of a \$129 Craftsman tool made in 1978, I would need to pay \$507.28 in today's currency. The \$129 I paid for this compressor gets me \$32.80 of 1978 quality. To all my dad's tools hanging in the shop, this is a thirty-dollar compressor just made for banging around in the back of the truck.

Finally, if I don't bang it around too much, this compressor might last a year or two. In six years, I might buy three and still come out cheaper than an Ingersoll Rand that would easily last that long. Now that IS a bargain! Isn't it?

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry
 onthemiddlepath.com

see from them looks like skeletonizing of the leaves. They'll eat everything between the leaf vein, but leave the veins.

Thankfully, Japanese beetles only have a single generation each year. Usually the adults, which are the beetles that we see flying around eating leaves, will begin to appear in May - June. They live four to six weeks. The females will lay eggs for most of their adult life. The eggs are laid in the soil. They hatch in about two weeks. After hatching, the beetles live in the soil until they come back out as adults in May.

There are three times a year that are most ideal for controlling Japanese beetles. The most obvious is when they are adults and are out feeding on leaves. You can use carbaryl, which is the active ingredient in Sevin to control adults. Sevin comes as a liquid or in dust form. If you don't have a heavy infestation you can also use a cup with soapy water in it. Knock Japanese beetles off plants into the cup and they will drown. The second time to control Japanese beetles is in September. By that time of year all the Japanese beetles are grub living in the soil. Even as grubs they can do damage to turf by feeding on the roots. Milky spore is an organic product that can be used to kill grubs in the ground. It's a bacteria that feeds on Japanese beetle grubs after they ingest it. September is the optimal time to make a milky spore application. The third time to control Japanese beetles would be in the spring with another milky spore application. Soil temperatures need to be over 65 for milky spore to be effective. The grubs must ingest the milky spore for it to be work. It only works on grubs, so applying it while the beetles are out eating leaves won't kill any Japanese beetles.

Using milky spore to kill the grubs doesn't mean that you won't have any Japanese beetles the following year, but you can significantly reduce the population that is present in your area. Some people will use traps to kill Japanese beetles. I try to discourage people from this practice because traps with pheromone lures will bring beetles in from five miles away, meaning that you have more beetles.

If you have questions about Japanese beetles contact your county Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Japanese Beetles

The Japanese beetles will soon be out in full force. They are in west Georgia and will begin emerging here soon. They are a huge pest as they munch their way through your yard. Controlling them can be challenging because they are such voracious eaters. Let's talk about some strategies for lessening their impact.

Japanese beetles arrived in the U.S. in 1916. They have spread to much of the East coast and across the Mississippi River. They will feed on a wide range of ornamentals, fruit trees, vegetables, and shade trees. Feeding on such a wide range of plants means that your yard may look like an all you can eat buffet to them.

They have a metallic green color on their abdomen. They look similar to June beetles. June beetles are typically about 1.5 to twice as large as Japanese beetles. Japanese beetles also have a row of five white dots along the side of the abdomen that can be used to differentiate them from other beetles. The damage that you see from them looks like skeletonizing of the leaves. They'll eat everything between the leaf vein, but leave the veins.

Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Letters to The Editor

Systemic Racism

Dear Editor,
 We have all seen and heard the protests/riots against what has been referred to as "systemic police brutality against people of color." The topic seems to be talked about on every evening news program. We have seen an increasing number of references from Democrats about the problem of systemic racism. But no one has ever addressed the question of who is running these systems in the big cities. Minneapolis has been under Democratic control since 1978. Seattle has been under Democratic control for 51 years. Chicago has been under Democratic control for 89 years and its present mayor is a black woman. Philadelphia has had Democratic mayors for 68 years; three of the last five mayors have been black men. Six of the last seven Atlanta mayoral administrations were led by black Democratic mayors, and the present mayor is a black woman. And the list goes on! And, of course, these administrations are the ones who oversee these police departments. So, if there is so much "systemic racism" in these police departments, why hasn't it been corrected over so many years under Democratic leaders? We never get an answer.
Tim Groza

Two Thoughts

Dear Editor,
 Sad (a) seeing in America looters and arsonists destroying the livelihoods of small business operators and (b) then hearing other incorrigibles calling it merely inconsequential "collateral damage". Sad reading that in Hiawassee (and perhaps elsewhere locally) some otherwise sensible protestors advocating the abolition/defunding of local law enforcement.
 C'mon folks. Two thoughts: (1) get rid of extremism and understand improvement via compromise is not weakness and (2) "Give peace a chance" never goes out of style.
Claude Spears

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.

Dry Hydrant Advantages

A fire hydrant is not just a place for your male dog to raise his leg on but a source of water for fire tankers and engines to fill up with water to fight a fire. Here in the rural areas of North Georgia, we may have hydrants every 1,000 feet or so where there is county water, but that does not mean that it is near to all houses. Some are up steep, narrow, one lane roads where a fire truck cannot turn around even if it gets to the roads.

In our fire department as with all fire departments the number one priority is fire fighter safety and next is keeping our equipment safe so we don't want to put our firefighters and engines in harm's way where there is no way to get out without risking life and equipment. This is what Firewise is all about, keeping your home safe from wildfire that will buy you time for the fire department to get there with whatever equipment can get to your house.

Tate City is one of the communities that are isolated and not close to an easily accessible water source so the Towns County Firewise Coalition is planning to install a dry hydrant at the community center to give fire departments a place to get water without having to shuttle water along the narrow one lane 6 mile road and bridges leading from the paved road to the city. This should give residents a sense of relief and maybe help with their insurance rates.

To install a dry hydrant, knowing about a quantity of available water in area streams, ponds and cisterns gives an advantage to a fire department only if the water is readily accessible. Or, the needed water may be located so far away from where it is needed that a fire department's ability to do its job of fire control is impaired. Mobile water supply vehicles can move water from distant sources, but the critical factor is whether the fire department can maintain an uninterrupted supply of a predictable rate of water at the fire scene.

Installation of dry hydrants into numerous nearby and developed water supplies eliminates the inefficiency and complexity of long-distance water shuttle operations. This arrangement also allows access to water sources from a roadway instead of having to work on soft ground immediately adjacent to the pond or stream. A dry hydrant consists of an arrangement of piping with one end in the water and the other end extending to dry land and available for connection to a pumper. When a strategically placed dry hydrant with all-weather road access allows more water to be distributed in less time, and the water can be applied effectively on the fire, fire fighter safety is improved. Savings can be financial, as well.

For example, when the volunteer fire department in Forsyth County, Georgia used the dry hydrant water delivery system with proper training and equipment, county homeowners enjoyed a 49 percent drop in insurance rates. Fire departments also save money by reducing fuel and equipment costs through shorter transportation distances and lower operational demands. Communities can preserve more of their treated water supplies, since dry hydrants use untreated water.

For more information on dry hydrants, contact RC&D at www.info.ccred@gmail.com.

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