

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

T. Graham Brown

I don't know how many folks around here enjoy Country Music, but come Saturday, July 1, Country Music lovers are in for a treat. It requires a drive to Hiawassee's Anderson Music Hall. There, you'll enjoy the music of legendary Country Music star, T. Graham Brown.



Straight Shooting
Charles Duncan
Editor

T. Graham called me last week to talk about his upcoming show with Jimmy Fortune. He's excited about coming back to Georgia, you see. T. Graham is a native of South Georgia. He rose to fame in the mid-1980s with hits like I Tell It Like It Used To Be, and Hell and High Water. He's touring with Jimmy Fortune, formerly of the Statler Brothers. Fortune said that folks coming to Hiawassee would surely hear one of the most legendary voices ever to perform in Country Music - T. Graham Brown. They also will hear more than 50 years worth of Gospel, Country and Rock 'n Roll. And, if you really want to get a feel for what to expect, just go to YouTube and type in the names T. Graham Brown, and Jimmy Fortune.

Fortune said that today's modern technology allows both he and T. Graham to remain prominent in the music industry. It's true and the really pertinent fact is that you'll meet two truly down-to-earth entertainers. Both say the thrill of a crowd is the frenzy that makes them thrive. They also love to sign autographs. And because of modern technology, both say they no longer chase media moguls or record labels.

"I'll tell you the truth, I'm having the time of my life," T. Graham said. "We're coming to Hiawassee and we're going to have an incredible time." T. Graham said working with Jimmy Fortune is an incredible experience. "We've been friends for years," he said. "Jimmy spent 21 years performing with the Statler Brothers. Believe me, he knows a thing or two about music."

Tickets are \$37 for Level I seating, and \$27 for Level 2. Call (706) 896-4191 for more details. You'll be glad you did.

Warriors, bonded souls

Noble and Ruby Rhine-smith are two of the kindest, most generous "warriors" for everything that is right you'll ever know. They both still volunteer for critically important all American issues. Even after all they have been through. And have dear friends located all across these mountains. They love cooking and Ruby is an amazing crafter.



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran

Noble was born in Passaic, NJ on May 29, 1940, grew up in West Milford. He played a little football in the adjacent county of Morris. He had a well respected Veteran USMC friend advising him on his passion to join the USMC "Airwing". Being assertive with recruiters, earned his dream of enlisting at age 17, inactive reserve. One week out of HS he was in Parris Island, SC basic training, and then placed into duty for Guard Company until the 2nd Marine Airwing opened up. Noble then served our nation as a helo mechanic as corporal in Squad 264 for 3 years.

Back home he worked as a lab tech for Westinghouse two and a half years then joined our nation's blue forces against anarchy in West Milford. Served as sergeant of detectives before leaving police work and moving to Stuart, FL, as newspaper circulation manager for 7 years, then recognizing the need, thus creating this own very successful window screen business for Floridians.

Coinciding with his wife Debbie's 14-year-long battle with cancer, her passing and leaving 20 years in his screen business, Noble bought his home here, a beautiful home and location in 2005. A chance meeting "set up" by a Home Depot associate led him to meeting Ruby, another who had lost her spouse to untimely passing, at our Mary's Southern Grill, and associated with the Methodist Church at the time. Long story short they turned out to be as perfect as two can be for each other. Noble has a grandson serving in our US Army and has personally helped recruit two young Marines from Union County HS. Beginning in July 2016 Noble had health problems lessening his heart and other issues that would have killed a strong young person, and should have taken Noble. His warrior wife, Ruby, never left his hospitalized side, purchasing her own air mattress and sleeping bag to camp out beside him. She convinced the seemingly inept doctor to take him out of this medically induced coma so they could actually discover what was wrong. This led, much later, to several procedures, a quadruple bypass and today a strong healthy happy Noble and Ruby. Trust me; this is the very SHORT version of their hellishly long year!

Upon asking Noble would he enlist in the Marine Corps again, resulted in a "300%, yes!" Upon asking both of them what is their message for all of us, a very simple two word answer came forth, "Trust God!"

Ruby wants to wholeheartedly issue a "Thank You!" to all the "prayer warriors" in and around our beautiful North Georgia Mountain community.

Semper Paratus

Got no Soul

When you have lived here long enough you start to forget what it's like to be back in the rat race. That's OK. We want to forget. We came here to forget.

The rat race is, nevertheless, always available for those who want it, and some people thrive on it. It's only a click away in a society intent on finding new ways to become connected. We are urged at every turn to login, to join in - to follow - the vast electronic network that reaches ever further, probing, collecting, and often manipulating. This web of impulses and opinions and motives has become almost a form of consciousness on its own, greater than the sum of its individual parts, though there are those who are ever intent on using it for their own purposes.

Some of us never disconnect from this increasingly global hive mind. Even here in our green valleys far from broken news updates, we bow our heads to the little glowing rectangles, and walk into walls or drive into ditches. We expect instant access and constant updates to everything the hive declares important. Even the random thoughts fished from our own streams of consciousness are now so significant that they need to be instantly recorded and shared with our friends and indeed, with the world. As the Borg said to Captain Picard, "Resistance is futile. You will be assimilated."

I'm reminded of this assimilation when we go to the city on business. Without a mountain to lift our spirits, a wooded path to soothe the soul, growing things to quicken the spirit, the sound of running water and the wind in the trees, the television gets turned on more often. The computer stays on. The smartphone, which doesn't work at all behind the mountain, comes alive with beeps and buzzes.

Handel. Ossoff. Ossoff, Handel. That's all the television seemed to say on a recent stay in town. Each candidate said that the other one was dishonest, corrupt and bad for the country. No one ever seemed to consider that they may have both been right. Or wrong. But that's how partisanship works, and after too many years of partisanship we have reached an inflection point in history where each side in this continuing conflict is convinced that their team is on the one true path to saving civilization. Each side is encouraged to believe that this is exactly what is at stake. Each team is the sole possessor of the truth. We've been here before, if that's any consolation.

Oh, the spectacle of it all! The tens of millions of dollars spent. Wasted. The talking heads, the misleading polls, the celebrity tweets. There were those of us who hoped that the embarrassment of the entire 2017 political race would awaken some voters. The dishonesty and the raw cunning of the candidates, the political machines and the media was laid bare for all to see. But we did it all again, this time in Georgia, next time somewhere else.

So we elected a Republican in the 6th District. The tweets are tragic and triumphant, but nothing has changed, and nothing will change as long as the pendulum keeps swinging left and right, powered by the latest crisis. This election turned out not to be a referendum on Trump at all. Though the democrats outstep the republicans in multiples, and the same discredited coalition of celebrities and media giants took their best shot in Georgia, they failed. They failed because they still don't understand why they lost in 2016.

And what does the hive mind think of the election? It's hard to say. It seems to be of two minds, at least in America. The creative front part of the mind, where a lot of democrat thoughts gather, is wasting away, caught up in visions and fantasies. The back of the brain, the part that is responsible for keeping the body alive and where republican thoughts are more at home, is consumed with thoughts of survival and often quite fearful.

The nation, just like a person, can function quite well with a brain divided by its basic functions as long as the mind is healthy, and what is mind but the central processing unit for the soul? But the national mind is not healthy. We have a splitting headache, and we're beginning to think we might be bipolar. We've lost contact with our national soul, and we're not quite sure who is calling the shots, or what direction we're headed. Our mind is in a bitter tug of war between fantasy and fear. We need to find our soul connection again before something breaks.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Mummy Berry

While some of us are watching our nice juicy blueberries ripen in the warm summer weather, others are inevitably watching their crop shrivel and drop. This disease is called mummy berry and is caused by the fungus *Monilinia vaccinii-corymbosi*. Once it presents itself in a blueberry crop, there is no way to save it. However, there are many options for removing the infection after harvest and preventing it from establishing in your bushes next year.



UGA extension
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee

Berries that are infected with the fungus were actually infected by dead berries (called mummies) from last year's crop. The mummies overwinter on the ground below bushes and break dormancy right around bud swell. About one month later, cup-like structures grow out of the mummies and produce infectious spores during cool, wet weather. The spores are carried on air currents up to the buds and infect new shoots. These infected shoots will produce leaves covered in secondary spores called "conidia." The next stage of infection occurs at bloom. Once the flowers open, air currents once again spread the conidia to the developing fruit within the flower, causing the shriveled berries we now see. Instead of turning a rich blue color, berries will begin to turn cream colored, shrivel up and immediately drop on the ground where they will overwinter as mummies and infect next year's crop.

Because mummy berry infections can ruin most of the berries on a bush, it is important to take four main steps to prevent the disease from establishing.

1. Keep it clean. After your winter pruning, make sure to remove all dead and cut wood surrounding the bush. Once the wood is removed, thoroughly rake under your blueberry bushes to remove any infected mummies remaining from last year. This will prevent any of the previous season's mummies from infecting the current year's shoots in the spring.

2. Cover it up. Once you have removed all potential sources of infection from your bushes, put down a thick layer of mulch to cover any small mummies or twigs that you may have missed. Pine bark mulch is usually recommended for blueberry bushes. Always make sure the mulched area is at least as wide as the crown of the bush. This way, anything that may have dropped from the plant is completely covered and cannot be transferred by the wind.

3. Protect your plants. There are multiple options for chemical treatments of blueberries. However, since there are two potential stages for infection, it is important to treat in the appropriate window of time. Captan is currently the most effective option for controlling mummy berry infections. Spraying with captan at budbreak and at first flower, when your plants are most vulnerable, will provide the greatest protection. There are also alternatives such as Serenade MAX (a Bacillus subtilis product) and lime sulfur. However, captan is the most effective treatment currently approved for use against mummy berry.

Sanitation is without a doubt the most important part of preventing this fungal disease from damaging your plants. Even if you spray fungicides appropriately, if mummies are still under your bushes, you are still going to have a mummy berry problem. Blueberry bushes in clean areas will without a doubt be the healthiest.

Union and Towns County Extension will be holding a Master Naturalist Class Wednesdays starting July 26th and ending September 20th at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center. This is an eight week course that meets once a week and covers wildlife management, tree and insect ID, invasive species, Georgia natural history, and many other topics. Registration fee is \$250 for the entire eight week course. Please call ASAP to register!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA!

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.

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

Towns County Community Calendar

Bingo	Every Monday: Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Bridge Players	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
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Friday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Mtn. Amat. Radio	First Monday of each month: 1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 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
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
Republican Party	Fourth Thursday of each month: New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Last Thursday of each month: Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:
America-What Are Our Values

I would like to thank Tim Groza for his thoughtful and courteous article about his support of Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. It is good that we in America can all have our opinions. I think the important question is, "What is the morally right thing to do about climate change?" Even if we disregard the fact that China plans on investing \$361 billion over the next 5 years in renewable energy to create 13 million new jobs and that it is decreasing its coal usage every year, and even if we ignore the fact that the future of America is in renewable energy, the real question is, "Do we, as Americans, have a moral responsibility to do our best to ensure that future generations do not suffer from the disastrous effects of climate change that the vast majority of climate experts are warning us about?" Are future generations and people in different parts of the world as important as we are? Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me."

For me, it is truly a moral decision. If we, as Americans, can only think of what is best for us, right here and right now, and turn our back on the damage it may do to others and to future generations, then we have truly lost our way, and it will be hard for us to find our way back. Those future generations are also our children and our grandchildren. If we lose our moral way, we lose the true strength of America.

Vernon Dixon

Towns County Herald

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Kenneth West Owner/Publisher
Charles Duncan Editor
Shawn Henrikson Copy Editor
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Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee
Phone: (706) 896-4454 **Fax:** (706) 896-1745 **Email:** tcherald@windstream.net
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546