

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Danger Will Robinson

I know there are folks out there that like to dabble with the recreational use of illegal drugs.

I know that comes as a shock, considering 37 people were busted here last week for partaking in the illegal drug trade.

Well, I just got a release from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation warning Georgians that there are some illegal drugs out there on the street that can kill just by touching them with one finger.

The GBI Crime Lab in Cleveland has identified two new fentanyl analogues, acrylfentanyl and tetrahydrofuran fentanyl.

The GBI Crime Lab had not previously identified both of these synthetic opioids. They both can be absorbed through the skin and are considered highly dangerous.

The research of these dangerous opioids began when the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office submitted forensic drug evidence containing these two drugs to the crime lab in March of this year.

Acrylfentanyl had been on the GBI's watch list for the past few months. Multiple reports in other states indicated that the opioid reversal drug, naloxone, may not be effective if someone overdosed after ingesting acrylfentanyl.

Legislation was introduced this year to outlaw acrylfentanyl in Georgia. The law banning the substance went into effect after passage by the Georgia General Assembly and the Governor's signature on April 17, 2017. At this time, tetrahydrofuran fentanyl is not covered under Georgia law.

It is unknown how the human body will react to both drugs since they are not intended for human or veterinary use.

Not intended for human or veterinary use is the key phrase here folks. Believe me, there are some young folks - and older folks that would experiment with these drugs.

For those who do use, smoke your pot, or drink your beer, but stay the heck away from opioids. They may look legit, but trust me, at least four people in Georgia are dead because of these drugs. A fifth person has recovered from just touching the drugs.

As state and local law enforcement track down the source of these drugs, just remember that it only takes one time taking the wrong stuff to kill you.

**Straight Shooting**  
Charles Duncan  
Editor



## A Neighbor Named Hazel

It's hard to love a snake.

I know, all creatures great and small, but even though I am a snake supporter, I have to admit that there is something very snaky about a snake. I had a pet King Snake in college. (It was just a phase.) I've captured beneficial snakes and brought them to the farm and I've relocated other snakes. My official snake policy on the farm is "live and let live." In fact, we have the same policy for all the creatures that share this space.

Except for Copperheads. Copperhead behavior and puppy behavior is not compatible. Copperheads just won't get out of the way. They "bow up" and stand their ground and wait for you or one of your dogs to step on them. "Go ahead. Step on me. I dare you. I was here first and I'm not moving."

I don't relocate Copperheads, but I do relocate parts of Copperheads.

Rattlesnakes? No problem. We have co-existed here with timber rattlers for decades. Rattlesnakes are thoughtful enough to alert you to their presence, otherwise they are good at getting out of the way.

Snakes are just too beneficial to disrespect. They earn their keep in mice alone, and the only cost to me is watching where I put my feet. We could all use an occasional reminder to watch where we put our feet.

We don't have water moccasins here in the North Georgia Mountains. Some people will argue with that, but I've never seen one, and the biologist for our Conservation Easement says that this area is outside their range. I'll take the word of the person who can name every living thing you encounter when you walk with her in the woods.

We do have water snakes though, and they look enough like water moccasins to get your attention, and - they are extremely snaky. They can also be aggressive. They like to jump out of a bush and into the water when you're trout fishing. I think it amuses them to wait until the last minute when you're almost directly under them.

Water snakes are spring-loaded, and they can jump an unbelievable distance. I saw one jump about 10 feet into the Chattooga River. The kid who disturbed him was in a canoe and decided to float over to a rock face and investigate a hole. The snake cleared his face by about 3 inches. Fear makes you do illogical things. The poor kid screamed and jumped into the river - with the snake. When he realized what he had done, I swear that kid walked on water. I don't blame him.

We have a water snake living in our frog pond. When you look at her head, there is no doubt that she is non-poisonous. She looks almost sweet, with a ghost of a Mona Lisa smile, and she has pretty eyes. I named her Hazel. While Hazel's visage is very becoming, if you come upon any other part of her unawares, there is a visceral reaction. The grab in the gut, the raised hairs on the arms and the tingle in the spine all shout, "Snake!" We're trying to get used to each other, since the pond is right next to the garden. But even when I know it's her with the pretty eyes, those intimidating markings and that serpentine slither do not inspire a warm cozy feeling.

The frogs in our pond are not very happy with Hazel as a neighbor. Some of them have moved to another nearby pond, and the ones that remain are not nearly as mouthy as they once were. There were far too many frogs in that pond for the available food supply, but thanks to Hazel, there is a better balance now.

Nature always seeks balance, if we get out of the way and allow it to happen.

### 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

## Black Rot

Whether they're for a tasty snack on a hot summer day or making some wine to enjoy with dinner, grapes are a great crop to grow in our North Georgia environment. However, many grape crops are susceptible to a serious disease known as black rot. Though black rot can severely damage a crop, once you know you have it, it can easily be managed in future seasons.

Black rot is caused by the fungus *Guignardia bidwellii*. It can affect every part of the vine above ground: leaves, tendrils, canes, shoots and flowers. Crop loss occurs when berries become infected, rot and drop off prematurely. Leaf spots will typically occur one week after infections. The spots are tan and round, and they often have a reddish-brown border. Just like with Septoria leaf spot that I mentioned in tomatoes a few weeks ago, small black fruiting bodies called pycnidia appear on the grape leaf spots. The spores in these pycnidia will infect new tissue, eventually causing black, sunken lesions on stems. Eventually, berries will develop light brown spots that will rapidly enlarge and cause them to shrivel into wrinkled black "mummies."

After harvest, the disease overwinters in these mummified berries, old vine wood and stem lesions that remain on the plant. Once the first warm spring rains come the next year, the spores germinate and infect new tissues and the fungus once again establishes on the plant. Berry infections start when the grapes are in bloom and continue until the start of ripening. Ripe grapes are not vulnerable to infection because of their increased sugar content. Because of this, disease spread usually stops in late summer.

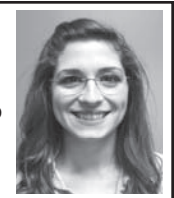
Though tissue that becomes infected with black rot will remain infected throughout later seasons, there are ways to manage the spread of the disease and maintain good crop yields on infected vines. Make sure to promote fast-drying of your planting because increased moisture in your canopy can encourage black rot infections. You can do this by ensuring proper vine spacing, selecting well-drained planting sites and proper pruning techniques. Always remove and destroy infected tissue and mummified berries and other tissue that have dropped on the ground.

If you have trouble managing black rot, avoid cultivars such as Concord, Reliance and Delaware and Catawba which are susceptible. Fredonia and Niagara are both resistant, as are many other varieties depending on how well they are maintained. Finally, if you have an established infection, protect new plant tissue with fungicide sprays as recommended by your local extension office. If your vines have a history of black rot, it is important to start protecting them early. Sometimes, summer cover sprays are necessary during heavy periods of rain.

For more information about grape varieties or black rot management, contact your local extension office.

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 register by July 19th!

UGA extension  
From the Ground Up  
Melissa Mattee



## Freedom, Liberty, Opportunity

Great words, right? But what does freedom really mean?

What are you willing to pay for freedom? These questions need to be answered as we celebrate our Independence Day, July 4, 2017. These freedoms and liberties bear responsibilities and the desire to maintain one's independence. Chose any other nation's governance model, as Sharia Law or Communism to imagine what our world would be like minus our United States of America.

From our nation's beginnings as a Sovereign Republic, coming forth from the horrors and turmoil of our Revolutionary War and first patriots defeating the most powerful army and navy of a ruthless royal tyranny, those freedoms and the security of our nation wasn't and never will be free. The cost shall forever be treasure and blood. Our concern as freedom loving Americans should be as to how to keep those costs at a minimum, at the same time never, ever giving up our hard earned nation's existence as the brightly beaming lamp of freedom known before in world history.

Today our nation's soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coast guard have always stood the tests of time and the rigors of serving in order to maintain our security and our constitutionally restricted government. Many have made the supreme sacrifice, laying down their lives for these sacred purposes. All Veterans have given of themselves for the same reasons. "ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL." Please never forget. It must be remembered that a strong military presents a very strong deterrent against those who would do us harm out of their hatred, jealousy, greed or resentment for our nation presenting a way of life which often threatens warped fascist and/or socialist ideologies, not unlike those of King George that our nation defeated almost 240 years ago, and celebrated each 4th of July. The "official" end of our Revolutionary War is recognized as 1783, but perpetual is our quest to maintain freedom.

As such our American Legion Post #23 is now offering the first year's membership free of charge to any and all Towns County men and women who are currently serving our nation in any of our five armed services. This would be limited to US Army, US Navy, USMC, USAF, or USCG. Our Commander, John Harkins and our members will absorb those costs for these fine young men and women currently serving America. We are under the umbrella of VFW Post 7807 and those Veteran organizations therein. Our American Legion affiliation is inclusive to American Legion Auxiliary, American Legion Riders, and Sons of American Legion. Also located at our facilities are VFW Auxiliary and Marine Corps League. This recruitment offer is limited to American Legion membership and would be a great way for younger folks to begin their lives after military service. If you know of any young person serving our nation in uniform, who would like to become a member of our fine American Legion, please call John Harkins at 706-970-0530, or contact via email at: harkinspost23@gmail.com.

Semper Paratus

The Veterans' Corner  
Scott Drummond  
USCG Veteran



"Just think, no more taxes!"

## Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
	Every Tuesday:	
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Wednesday	
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Thursday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Friday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Sunday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	First Monday of each month:	
Mtn. Amat. Radio	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
	First Tuesday of each month:	
Alzheimer's Supp.	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
	First Wednesday of each month:	
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
	First Thursday of each month:	
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Second Monday of each month:	
Chamber Board	1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
Historical Society	Old Rec. Center	5:30 pm
Mtn. Comp. Users	www.mcug.org	6 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	7 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Second Tuesday of each month:	
Caregiver support	Brasstown Manor	3 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Mtn. Regional Library	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
	Second Wednesday of each month:	
Basket Weavers	SC Fire Hall	10 am
Board of Elections	67 Lakeview Cir., Ste. A	4 pm

## Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Upon hearing about a young man being burned by a bucket of hot grease (350 degrees), it gave my heart a jolt. I have operated a restaurant for 36 years (without missing a day) and know well that NEVER do you drain a hot fryer. You drain it the next morning when it's cold.

I can't imagine the kind of burns he sustained or how much pain he's in. You and I both know how much a little burn hurts. What if it was your whole body?

I'm writing this because since I heard about this incident, other people have told me about other restaurants that also require employees to empty fryers while they're hot.

Restaurant owners and managers: Please, I beg you, change your policy on this. This does not need to happen again!

Willene Haigler

## 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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