

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Major SCOTUS Wins

Last month during the final days of the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022-2023 term, our nation received numerous landmark rulings that have profound impacts on the future of our Republic. Given the significance of four crucial decisions, I wanted to share my thoughts on these major judicial wins with you.



United States Congressman  
Representative  
**Andrew Clyde**

### Religious Freedom & Free Speech

In two separate cases, the U.S. Supreme Court delivered tremendous victories for Americans' religious liberty and freedom of speech. The first decision unanimously ruled in favor of a Pennsylvania postal worker who refused to work on Sundays because of his faith. Additionally, in a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Colorado graphic designer who refused to create wedding websites for same-sex couples due to her religious objections.

These two rulings remind me of June 24th, 2022 – when the Supreme Court rightfully overturned *Roe v. Wade*, because these decisions will have enormous impacts on our religious freedoms. No American should be forced to choose between their faith and their job, which is why it's so critically important that our nation's highest Court affirmed that our religious liberty and freedom of speech will always be protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

### Equal Opportunity

As Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." On June 29, our nation took a monumental step toward that vital vision.

That Thursday, the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed that it is unconstitutional to consider race in university admissions, commonly known as affirmative action. In a 6-3 ruling, the Supreme Court argued affirmative action violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution's 14th Amendment. The decision came after the Court considered the admission practices of two well-known academic institutions: Harvard College and the University of North Carolina. Both schools, as with many universities across the country, claimed a minority applicant's race should improve their chances of admission. Thankfully, with the Supreme Court's landmark ruling, this unconstitutional practice is now recognized as unlawful – with the only carveout being military academies; more on that later.

I applaud the Supreme Court for its critical decision against affirmative action, as race-based criteria in any institution undoubtedly defies the 14th Amendment, unnecessarily sows division, and advances systemic discrimination. All students, no matter their physical characteristics, deserve an equal opportunity to obtain a higher education. In fact, all success in our nation must be measured by merit and content of character – not skin color.

### Financial Responsibility

Additionally, in a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court struck down President Biden's unconstitutional student loan debt transfer scheme. As you know, the President's plan is not only illegal, as the executive branch does not have the authority to take such action, but it is also morally bankrupt. There is no "forgiving" or "canceling" more than \$400 billion in student loan debt; Joe Biden's measure would simply transfer the borrowers' burden to all taxpayers. It's indefensible, unacceptable, and unlawful to force Americans who didn't go to college, didn't have student loans, or already paid off their loans to foot this catastrophic bill. I'm thankful that fairness, commonsense, and the rule of law prevailed – delivering a huge win to American taxpayers and our economy.

I applaud the Supreme Court for issuing these victorious opinions, and I thank President Donald Trump for making these major judicial accomplishments possible. By appointing three constitutionalist justices to the bench, Trump made a historic impact on the Supreme Court and the future of our Republic. Just like Dobbs, last week's incredible rulings bolster President Trump's first term legacy – marking pivotal decisions that will undoubtedly impact generations to come.

## 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](mailto:tcherald@windstream.net).

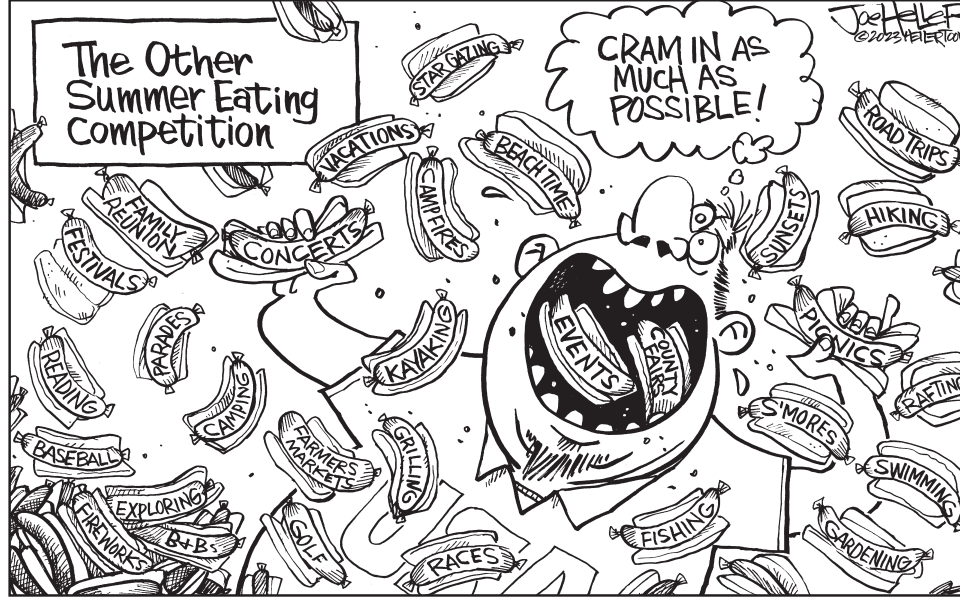
Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes.

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 Remnant

Sometimes our discussions here don't appear to be very complimentary of younger generations, and that is a misconception I wish to rectify.

Every generation has a tendency to disparage its replacement, and hold it responsible for change that it finds undesirable. The older we get, the more we find it difficult to accept change. We forget sometimes that it is the duty of youth to test boundaries, and sometimes to redraw them. We also forget who their parents are.

Proverbs tells us, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it," but our children missed out on some of that training. It began before us, but my generation saw a significant departure from the age old tradition which kept a parent in the home to raise the children. The economy did not encourage that, and it took two incomes just to make ends meet. Who created that economy? Our parents did.

My generation invented the internet and ushered in the Age of Information. Given every opportunity and convenience by parents who wanted better for their children, we became narcissistic in the pursuit of our gratifications. We created a culture and an economy which conditions its members for gratification through consumption. We abandoned faith in the Creator, love of country and adherence to a moral code. Then as prodigal children returning, we see the results of our failure to pass along those principles in our offspring now grown, and blame them for their shortcomings.

But just how "bad" is it that so many people are not optimistic about the future? I think it depends to a certain extent on where you get your information. If your information comes, for example, from Fox News or The Daily Mail, then look out, because the sky is falling every time the news breaks. If there is one Associate Professor of Rage in one junior college anywhere in this nation of 330 million, they will sift through every pixel until they find that person and report on what they said.

Every celebrity millionaire basketball player victimized because of her race gets space on the front page. Every angry exhortation from the View of Idiots who dominate the pixel universe is reported. Every shot fired, every crime committed, and every departure from civil society is sifted from the vast panoply of human action and presented for the shaping of our attitudes and actions.

Based on that presentation of reality, the situation does appear to be rather dire. Reporting from my own experience, however, and including only those things I have personally witnessed, a completely different version of reality emerges.

We have a young friend who took his engineering degree to Africa for two years of service doing his missionary work. Another friend with barely 30 years under his belt just bought his first house. He has done tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan and works now in law enforcement, putting his life on the line every day. We know young nurses who worked their way through school in pursuit of their credentials. Others young people we know lead lives less dramatic but just as meaningful, holding down jobs, raising families, taking responsibility for their children's lives.

To paraphrase Albert J. Nock from his essay, "Isiah's Job," civilization is not carried by the masses. It is nurtured and protected, and rebuilt when necessary, by the "Remnant." Those with "the force of intellect" to recognize truth and the "force of character" to act on it.

We don't hear about this remnant often enough. Some of our biggest pixel pushers would have us believe that the remnant is difficult to impossible to find among the devolving youth of our civilization. They are not hard to find, however if you bother to look, and sometimes they hide in plain sight.

## Towns County Community Calendar

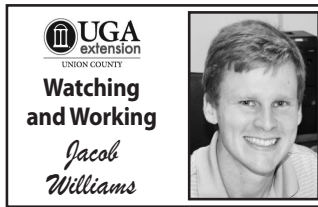
<b>First Monday of each month:</b>	School Board... HS/MS Media Center	6:45 pm
<b>Every Tuesday:</b>	Storytime for Children... TC Library	10:30 am
<b>First Tuesday of each month:</b>	Hiaw. City Council... City Hall	6 pm
	YH City Council... YH City Hall	6:30 pm
<b>Second Tuesday of each month:</b>	Conventions & Visitors Board... Civic Center	8 am
<b>Second Wednesday of each month:</b>	Board of Elections... Elections Office	4 pm
<b>Third Monday of each month:</b>	Planning Commission... Temporary Courthouse	6 pm
<b>Third Tuesday of each month:</b>	Commissioner's Mtg... Courthouse	5:30 pm
	Meeting Room in City Hall	5 pm
	Water Board... Water Office	6 pm

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## American Chestnut

Many years ago, the Appalachian mountain range was covered in an estimated 4 billion American chestnut trees. These trees were a keystone species, providing important habitat and food for a wide range of wildlife. Chestnut wood is rot resistant and makes excellent timber. They were also the tallest trees in the Eastern US. They grew to over 100 feet tall and could have a trunk diameter of over 10 feet. Many farms would fatten cattle or pigs on chestnuts before taking them to sale. They truly were an integral part of our ecosystem. However, in the early 1900s an invasive blight began to spread and kill the American chestnuts. Today there are only a handful of chestnuts left that are bigger than a sapling. The loss of the American chestnut has had a profound effect on the Appalachian landscape. But, not all hope is lost! Using modern breeding techniques scientists are closer than ever to being able to replant the American chestnut. Let's talk about this amazing tree and what is being done to bring it back from extinction.



Watching and Working  
**Jacob Williams**

Chestnut trees that you see now are most likely Chinese chestnuts, or American-Chinese chestnut hybrids. These bloom in June. The Chinese chestnut trees have resistance to the blight, and the American chestnuts do not. Chinese chestnuts and Chinese hybrids do not have the same growth structure as American chestnuts. These trees don't grow as tall or straight, which makes their timber value considerably less. They also don't persist well in our forests.

There are breeding efforts to reduce the amount of Chinese genetics in hybrids, but still have a tree that has resistance to the blight. These conventional breeding programs take many years to produce a candidate. There has also been work done to genetically engineer American chestnuts to have blight resistance. This has been achieved by inserting a gene from wheat called oxalate oxidase. This gene is able to fight the fungus inside the tree, allowing the tree and the fungus to coexist. This gene was selected because it is safe to humans and wildlife. It is commonly found in the environment. This transgenic research has produced to closest to the form of the original wild American chestnut. The transgenic chestnut is called Darling 58.

As with any transgenic plant, it must go through rigorous testing before being released to the public. The FDA, USDA, and EPA must approve to deregulate the transgenic chestnuts, before they can be made publicly available. These government agencies are currently reviewing the Darling 58. If it becomes approved, there will still be at least seven years before you could buy a Darling 58 tree to plant. This is because of the amount of time it takes for chestnuts to grow and develop seeds. The American Chestnut Foundation has the goal of repopulating Appalachia with American chestnuts. Even with the research closer than ever, that goal is still many years away. However, with the advancements that have been made, it is conceivable that we will have growing populations of American chestnuts in our forest in the next 20 years. That would be a huge benefit to our forests and wildlife that hasn't been seen for 100 years.

If you have questions about the American Chestnut contact your County Extension Office or email me at [Jacob.Williams@uga.edu](mailto:Jacob.Williams@uga.edu). You can also check out the American Chestnut Foundation website at [acf.org](http://acf.org). They have a lot of great information on the breeding programs for chestnuts and how you can become involved.

## Letters To The Editor

### It's A Shame

Dear Editor,

WOW, and double WOW!! I just got my check for the Board of Education Tax Refund!! It was for \$15.07. It was received only days after receiving a balance due notice of \$293.16 for taxes not paid from my account due to an increase in my property value LAST YEAR by nearly \$30,000. This was an increase of almost 64% over the previous year's taxes (\$537.75 to \$830.91). I've got to come out of my pocket now with the money. The appeals process is a joke, as there was not an appraisal of my property, rather a drive-by at the back of my house. No personal contact was made. I am sure many of you have gone through this same process with as little results as we had.

Shame on the County Commissioner and the County Tax Assessor for allowing the blatant assessment increases without any justification, other than it is "across the board." Hogwash. \$464 of this newest assessment is for school tax. I believe in a quality education for all our students, and in fact, insist upon it. The retired community can only come up with so much to support schools for which we have no children involved. But I did get \$15.07 back. The cost of 2 dozen eggs. It's a shame, folks.  
**Larry S. Chandler**

### Satan Is Real

Dear Editor,

Satan is real. Once a beautiful angel was created by God with free will just like we have here on earth. But this angel called Lucifer wanted to be like God, so he and a third of the angels were cast out of heaven down to earth, and thus the name Satan was given to him, also called the prince of the air we breathe. Satan has never been in hell and has never seen hell but knows his time is short, because when Christ returns, Satan and all of his demons will be cast into hell.

Let me give you an example. Suppose I am standing beside a pool and three guys come charging at me to throw me into the pool. My next thought is to take as many of them with me as possible. Satan wants to take as many folks with him as possible, but he has to make up lies that seem to be like the truth so people will join forces with him and go to hell instead of heaven. I tell you this so you don't fall into Satan's pit of no return, for once you are there, you can never leave. What a sad legacy to leave behind for your children and grandkids. Food for thought.

**Frank F. Combs**

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# Towns County Herald

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