

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Our Presidents & Military

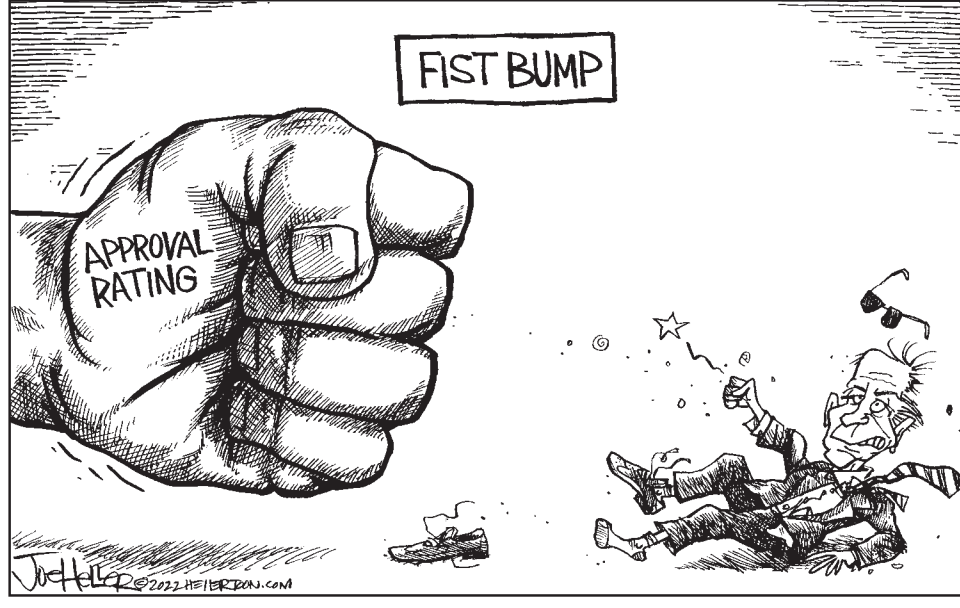
Covering little known history here, do you believe that an American President should have been required to serve in one of our military services? Whatever you believe, there is no such law in effect. However, in our unique Sovereign Republic's history, out of 45 presidents, a majority have served in some degree or another, and some in very unusual connections.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



Only 24 presidents served in wartime. George Washington and Dwight Eisenhower were ever Five Star Generals. George Washington can never be outranked. In 1976 legislation was passed that "it should be fitting and proper that no officer of the United States Army should outrank Lieutenant General George Washington on the Army list." In 1798, John Adams feared that the USA might be invaded by the French. Ergo he appointed George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of our U.S. Military. Washington served as an advisor in his elderly years and was irritated that he was unable to do more. Also, George Washington is our only sitting president to lead troops into battle, as he did in 1794 leading a militia into Western Pennsylvania during the Whiskey Rebellion. And, YES, let's move on to other presidents!

*James Buchanan, who served in the Pennsylvania Militia during the War of 1812 as an enlisted man, never became an officer.
 *Teddy Roosevelt is our only president to receive our Medal of Honor posthumously in 2001, 103 years after his charge up San Juan Hill. During his lifetime he proclaimed, "I am entitled to the Medal of Honor and I want it!" Wow! (Teddy Roosevelt's son, Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, was awarded the Medal of Honor, as were General Douglas MacArthur of World War II and his father General Arthur MacArthur of the Civil War, thus both father-son pairs were awarded the Medal of Honor.)
 *William McKinley served under Rutherford B. Hayes in the 23rd Ohio Infantry during the Civil War, with both becoming presidents in later years. Rutherford B. Hayes was wounded four times during the Civil War, the only president to suffer wounds during that war.
 *Grover Cleveland became a "draft dodger" during the Civil War by paying another man \$150 to take his place.
 *After his victory at Shiloh, Northerners sent Ulysses S. Grant more than 10,000 boxes of cigars. Also General Grant could NOT stand the sight of blood.
 *John Quincy Adams never served but was too close by happenstance during the Revolutionary War. During the Battle of Bunker Hill, he and his father were on a ship that was fired upon by the British navy.
 *Franklin Delano Roosevelt made his dog, Fala, an honorary Army private during WWII. During WWI, FDR tried to resign his post as Assistant Secretary to the Navy so he could fight. Didn't happen.
 *During WWII, Lyndon Johnson had to disembark the B-26 bomber he was on preparing to take off. They left without him and the entire crew was killed in a subsequent crash. LBJ's "bathroom call" saved his life.
 *Richard Nixon learned to play poker for money in the Navy, and those dollars funded his first congressional campaign.
 *George H.W. Bush's plane was downed in the Pacific during WWII, and he was rescued by a submarine.
 Before WWII, most presidents had served in the Army. After WWII, those who served were in the Navy.
 Of course, this list isn't 100%, complete and research is widely available. -Semper Paratus



Mummy Berry

Mummy berry is a fairly common disease that affects blueberry plants. It can be a pretty devastating disease to your blueberry harvest. By the time that you see the affects of it, the opportunity to treat has passed. Let's talk about mummy berry, how it works, and what you can do to manage it.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Mummy berry is a fungal disease on blueberry bushes. It causes the blueberries to rot and fall off just as they are ripening to be ready to harvest. This can be very frustrating to you as it looks like you're going to have a lot of blueberries and then one by one they fall off the bush. Mummy berry is not too difficult to manage, but you have to follow a couple of steps to make sure you get the best control of the disease possible.

Mummy berry infects the blueberry bush when it is in bloom. Those blooms will turn into fruit over the course of the season. Blooms that were infected carry the mummy berry pathogen with them, which causes them to rot and fall off. When they rot and hit the ground, the pathogen stays there over winter. In the early spring it forms apothecia, or tiny mushrooms. These release spores that infect the leaves of the plant. The infected leaves produce spores that are transmitted to the flowers by bees or wind, and thus the mummy berry life cycle continues on and on.

Because the infection of the fruit occurs at bloom it is most important to treat plants at that stage each year. Captan is a fungicide that is very effective at making sure that making sure that the blooms do not become infected. It's best to spray Captan every 7-10 days while plants are in bloom. There is an organic fungicide called Serenade that can be somewhat effective at controlling mummy berry if it is sprayed every 7 days. With Captan or Serenade it is important to get good coverage on the blooms of the plant. With any pesticide it is always important to read the label and follow it, as the label is the law.

A couple of other practices that can help to reduce the amount of mummy berry that you have are to remove dead berries after they fall. This will reduce the amount of pathogen that overwinters in the soil. To remove berries simply rake them out or use a leaf blower and then throw them into the trash or compost pile. Another practice is to mulch. Placing mulch 3-4 inches deep around the bush creates a physical barrier that is difficult for the mummy berry spores to move through. You don't want to place the mulch all the way up to the trunk of the bush. Pine straw, pine bark, or wood chips all work well for mulch.

The best control of mummy berry is to use a combination of spraying, removing, and mulching. If your blueberry bushes are in a secluded place, not close to any other bushes, it might be that you don't get mummy berry, or you have very little of it. Mummy berry is simple to control, if you get the timing right.

If you have questions about mummy berry contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

God's Bees

We return to the apiary to celebrate a generous honey harvest this summer, and unlike many summers, the bounty came without a penalty of swelling and itching justice administered by angry guardians.

Outside The Box
 By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

Keeping bees is not easy, and that includes keeping them alive, keeping them safe from bears, mites, weevils and diseases, and in some years just keeping them in the home you choose for them. Entomologists are still not sure what causes Colony Collapse Disorder, but the best educated guess points to a variety of factors.

Like several of our friends and neighbors who keep bees, we've had more lean years than good ones recently. In the spring of 2021, our bee yard was unoccupied. It was a lonesome sight, and a sad spectacle for anyone who enjoys the mysteries of our fuzzy, hard working friends.

Let me tell you about our bee yard. It was designed by bears. There is nothing sadder than a hive that has been disassembled by a bear, the wreckage surrounded by a small cloud of bereaved and bewildered bees. Contrary to popular belief, honey is not the biggest attraction for a bear. They eat the bees and the larvae; the honey is just a bonus.

We've lost several hives to bears over the years, but in spite of the loss, the mess, and the expense, it's hard to stay mad at our ursine companions. They were here first. We moved into their neighborhood at the edge of the great Nantahala Wilderness, where they struggle with loss of habitat that accompanies the spread of mountaintop Macmansions. They do perform a valuable service by digging up and eating every yellow jacket nest on the property.

Bears don't like electricity. Some pressure treated posts in concrete, some welded wire, and a strategic placement of electric fence has convinced the bears to look elsewhere for food. Good fences do make good neighbors.

Back to our lonely apiary, last year I was down to two hives. One succumbed to a cold snap, having failed to produce enough bees to keep warm. Bees cling together for warmth in the winter, rotating the queen safely in the center of the mass, and they rotate from the outside in to give everyone a chance to survive the cold.

The other unoccupied hive had seen it's residents depart en masse the previous fall. There were no dead bees, no signs of disease or infestation. They had simply disappeared, leaving behind a generous store of honey and pollen. They didn't even leave a note.

It was a warm day in March when I inspected the empty hives, and I sat a moment to reflect and to grieve. You get attached to your bees. Each hive has a personality, and a cumulative intelligence that can be surprising. They recognize individuals, and while they will tolerate someone they know and trust, they can terrorize a stranger.

I thought back to my grandfather's bees, long ago when hives would last for years without any of the treatments and interventions modern science has come up with to keep bees alive and healthy. It occurred to me that there was one thing my grandfather did that I hadn't tried. He used to pray over his bees. Before I left the apiary I had a quick conversation with the Almighty and requested that the next time I kept bees, he would have a hand in keeping them.

I left the bee yard thinking I might take a year off from beekeeping. The price of package bees, like so many other things, was almost double what it had been, though that price had been rising long before the current climate of inflation and opportunism. A farm is never short on chores and projects, so I soon forgot about bees and beekeeping.

In April I was cutting weeds by the garden when I noticed a honeybee collecting pollen from a dandelion. The nearest hives were over two miles away, so I thought, "You've come a long way for such a little bit of food." The thought of bees turned my gaze toward the hives and there, to my great surprise, I saw a swarm descending and collecting on the empty boxes. I ran to the hives and watched the new residents entering. Not one, but TWO swarms had moved in.

From that moment on, we called them "God's bees." It rarely, and for most people never happens that a swarm of bees will voluntarily choose to occupy an empty hive. My dad kept bees for 40 years and always had a "bait" hive in the hopes that a swarm would choose to occupy that instead of a tree branch 80 feet high and out of reach. It never happened.

God's bees came in the biggest swarm I've ever seen. They went to work immediately, and the hive was soon heavy from their labors. When winter came, they were well prepared with plenty of bees to stay warm and a large supply of pollen and honey.

This week we took the first honey we've had in several years, and God's bees are working hard to replace that surplus. They know who took their honey as well, and while they weren't angry or threatening when I removed it, I can tell they are concerned about it. It's been several days since the harvest, and they keep following me around the farm to ask me about the honey. One met me at the shop door this morning and buzzed around my head. "Is the honey safe?" In the garden, "We know you took it. Are you going to bring it back?" Yesterday coming out of the pool, "About that honey..."

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity began in 1976 on a small community farm in Southern Georgia. This grassroots organization spread its non-profit work into now being located in all 50 states and 70 countries internationally. Habitat's primary mission is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Providing stability and self-reliance to better the lives of families and children, the mission is proving to be a difficult one. After all, housing is a human right. Children living in stable, affordable home environments are more likely to thrive in school and succeed in greater opportunities in their futures. Cost-burdened families experience greater stress in relation to food security, health care and other environmental impacts on locals.

Habitat Happenings
 Executive Director
 Charlotte Randall



What is affordable housing and what does it look like? Affordable housing is considered 30% of a household's total income. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), 70% of extremely low-income families are spending 50% of their income on housing. The U.S. is showing a shortage of seven million affordable homes for the 10.8 million low-income families in the country. What's more frightening is, according to NLIHC, there is not a single state or county where a renter working a full-time minimum wage job can afford a two-bedroom apartment. Homeownership and affordable housing is officially unattainable.

Many factors have come into play in creating this crisis. The pandemic accelerated our already local housing shortage. With the increase in the ability to work remotely, and the need to escape crowded cities, our local communities have seen a drastic flight to rural areas such as ours. Land use regulation and cost, key factors through supply and demand, have made navigating and creating affordable housing a task that is daunting to many investors, and therefore not looked upon as a worthy investment. Minimum lot size regulations and home size restrictions also play into this crisis.

What is the solution for the affordable housing crisis? Advocating for higher density units? We certainly don't want a high-rise, market rate, concrete complex building polluting our beautiful mountain landscape. More than ever in history we need to think outside the box, however, banks and local municipalities frown upon the concept of a tiny home.

Larry Singleton is an architect designer that has become an admirable figure in the way of affordable housing. His company, Singleton Designs LLC, is working with Habitat for Humanity affiliates across Georgia to help solve this problem. Larry's designs, which he has coined the term "Pocket Neighborhoods," are a cluster of "smart-sized homes," centered around a common courtyard. These 350-1,000 square foot cottages are designed as quality, energy efficient homes that are also aesthetically pleasing. Check out his designs at Singleton Designs LLC on Facebook.

Supporting Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties LLC is a crucial and vital way to answer our needs to build affordable housing within our local communities. Funds raised through our local Habitat chapter will help create and shape ways to solve our housing crisis locally. After all, housing is a human right, and we owe it to humanity to provide the basic needs for our fellow man.

Letters To The Editor

Joe is Not Jimmy

Dear Editor,
 Recently a lot of people have been comparing Joe Biden to Jimmy Carter, mainly due to their similar approval ratings. Both presidents had to tackle inflation and energy problems. Sorry to say, but Joe Biden can't hold a candle to Jimmy Carter. Granted, Carter's presidency was a disaster and he became a one-term president. Only time will tell if Biden suffers the same fate. But, one has to admit, if we had to choose between Jimmy Carter and Joe Biden, we have to take Jimmy Carter hands down. Here's why. Let's recall that Jimmy Carter served as a lieutenant in the Navy. What about Joe Biden? While studying at the University of Delaware and Syracuse University, Biden obtained five student draft deferments, at a time when most draftees were sent to the Vietnam War. He is also a falsifier who claimed to finish at the top half of his class at Syracuse Law School, when actually he finished near the bottom. And let's not forget that a plagiarism scandal forced Biden to drop out of the 1988 presidential race. And then there is the alleged corrupt business dealings in China and Ukraine involving Joe Biden and his son Hunter. In contrast, Jimmy Carter was never enticed by the money, living a very unassuming life in Plains, Georgia, after he left office and overseeing the building of affordable housing through Habitat for Humanity. There is really no comparison when it comes to character. They are not even in the same ballpark.

Further, Carter always knew he was the president. Although he was criticized at times for micromanaging all kinds of issues, no one ever questioned who was at the helm in the White House. After U.S. oil production had fallen considerably, Carter reversed that trend and looked to increase U.S. energy production. In contrast, Biden intentionally targeted U.S. oil production to appease the radical liberals in his party. Carter never froze all new drilling permits in the U.S. He never canceled a major pipeline. For Carter, the energy shortage was a difficult problem to solve, not the intended byproduct of far-left Green New Deal policies. The main reason that the Biden presidency feels like the Carter years is the high inflation rate. An inflationary crisis began from the moment Biden took office. First, Biden denied inflation was happening. When inflation became undeniable, Biden shifted the blame to the war in Ukraine, Putin, "greedy corporations," and mom and pop gas stations for rising prices.

With respect to the border crisis, Carter saw illegal immigration as undesirable and wanted it to actually stop. Some people forget that it was Carter's idea to make it illegal for businesses to hire illegal immigrants. In contrast, Biden's open border policy has resulted in a complete and utter disaster. Illegals are flooding into the U.S. at a rate of two million a year, essentially making every state a border state.

In reality, Biden only wishes that he could be mentioned in the same breath as Jimmy Carter.

Tim Groza

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Kenneth West Owner/Publisher
Derek Richards Advertising Director
Shawn Jarrard General Manager/Editor
Jordan Hyatt Office Manager
Todd Forrest Staff Writer
Lowell Nicholson Photographer

Publication No: 635540
 Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.
 Towns County (1 Year) \$30. Out of County (1 Year) \$40. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.
 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