

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

August 4, 2022, 232 Years Old

America's oldest seagoing military/law enforcement service is 232 years old! I was honored, fortunate, and proud to serve in our USCG plus at my age now, and hindsight being 20/20, not only would I do it again, I'd have done my time much better and re-enlisted to stay longer!



The Veterans' Corner Scott Drummond USCG Veteran

Other branches of the Armed Forces have a good time joking about whether their "Coastie" brethren are actually a branch of the military, WE ARE! The Coast Guard continues to quietly straddle the dual mission of serving as a military force abroad and a law enforcement agency at home. We Coasties have a proud, albeit humble, laid back history.

With the Coast Guard's 232nd birthday on Aug. 4, 2022, here are just a minuscule few examples of what we have done:

Older than the US Navy, our USCG began life when President Washington established the Revenue Cutter Service to enforce U.S. tariffs in 1790, and was America's only maritime defense force until the Department of the Navy was established in 1798. The Navy officially dates its birthday back to the establishment of the Continental Navy in 1775, but was disbanded after the Revolutionary War. In 1915, the Revenue Cutter Service was merged with the U.S. Life-Saving Service, and was officially renamed the Coast Guard. In 1939, the Lighthouse Service was folded in and the Commerce Department's Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation was added to the USCG in 1946.

Despite the Coast Guard's endearing (or unending jokes, depending on which side you're on) nickname of "Puddle Pirates," the USCG's Cutters are ships capable of operating in the open ocean. (I prefer "Hooligan's Navy!") USCG's missions although varied from the Navy's, the newest cutters carry the same Phalanx close-in weapons systems that are present on naval vessels, along with the same electronic warfare and 57 millimeter guns on combat ships. Currently nine Cutters operate in the Bering Sea, Pacific Ocean and the Arctic Ocean.

You know of the Green Berets but you may not have heard of the U.S. Navy Seals but you may not have heard of the Coast Guard's Maritime Safety and Security Teams (MSST) and Maritime Security Response Teams (MSRT). Coast Guard MSST are used to prevent or deter potential terrorist attacks on the seas, bolster force protection operations, enforce laws, increase port security, aid with search and rescue and board hostile ships in and around American waters. We did this operating from the USCGC Diligence back in the 1960s, however we didn't have a special modern designation or special training. We just are doing our job. Coast Guard MSRT are trained to board and secure vessels, including those held by terrorists holding hostages. MSRT are proficient in close-quarters combat and boarding operations as well as chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, high-yield explosive situations.

NEVER FORGET DOUG MONRO!

Coasties have fought in every major American conflict since its inception, and this includes World War II. Signalman First Class Douglas Munro volunteered to support the Navy in landing Marines during the 1942 landings at Guadalcanal. When one group of Marines came under a massive Japanese counterattack while assaulting a beachhead, Munro led the evacuation of the Marine force.

While the Marines were loading onto the evacuation boats, Munro placed his boat between them and the incoming fire to protect the Marines. Munro then moved his boat to free one that had run aground before he was shot in the head by a Japanese machine gun.

Munro posthumously received the Medal of Honor for his actions in rescuing the Marines on Guadalcanal, and his medal currently has a place of honor in the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

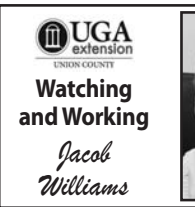
The USCGC Eagle began its life in 1936 in Nazi Germany as the SSS Horst Wessel christened by Adolf Hitler, the Horst Kriegsmarine. It served the Germans for three years, but when World War II kicked off, it was sidelined. USCGC Eagle is now a training vessel for officers.

Please never forget SAR is utmost in our USCG plethora of duties and missions. The USCG always has to go out when others never should! Semper Paratus!



Lawn Planting

Tall Fescue is the type of grass that I recommend the most often for lawns here. However, it is a cool season perennial. That means that its management is going to be different from warm season perennials like bermudagrass or St. Augustine grass. Let's talk about seeding tall fescue for a lawn because we are approaching the time of year when it's appropriate to seed it.



Watching and Working Jacob Williams

Tall fescue is a perennial grass, meaning that you don't need to reseed your lawn with it every year. However, if you seeded tall fescue in the spring you will need to reseed it. Because tall fescue is a cool season grass, it doesn't like the heat. If it's not well established, the summer heat will kill it. That's why I recommend planting it in mid-September. Planting in mid-September will give it time to establish throughout the fall and spring before going through the heat of July and August.

There are a number of varieties of tall fescue available. Usually when you buy a bag of tall fescue seed it will have several different varieties in that bag. This is a good thing because the different strengths and weaknesses of each variety are able to cover for each other. Kentucky 31 variety is the old standard for tall fescue. However, there are many new hybrids, which are much better for lawns.

One of the reasons that I like tall fescue for our area is that it has some of the best shade tolerance. With the amount of trees that we have, shade is often a limiting factor to plant growth. Creeping red fescue is actually a different species from tall fescue but it has even better shade tolerance than tall fescue. These grasses will still struggle in deep shade. What they have is a tolerance of shade, meaning they still prefer full sun, but can take some shade.

When planting tall fescue it is important to prepare the soil first. Taking a soil test and bringing it to your County Extension Office (67 Lakeview Circle Hiawassee or 165 Wellborn St Blairsville) will give you a lot of information about your soil. You'll get fertilizer recommendations and lime recommendations specific to your soil from a soil test.

Before planting till and incorporate all the lime and fertilizer that is recommended on your soil test. Incorporate the lime and fertilizer into the top 3 to 4 inches, or deeper if possible, of the soil. Ideally, you want to seed 5-6 pounds of seed per 1000 ft2. After seeding rake the seed into the top quarter inch of the soil with a hard rake. If the seed goes too deep, it will struggle to germinate. Apply straw mulch on top of the soil. This will help to conserve moisture in the soil and keep your seed from being washed away. Ideally, you want to keep the top 2 inches of soil moist, but not wet for the first 3 weeks. After that just water once a week if there is no rainfall.

Start out cutting tall fescue at 2 inches as the grass matures you can raise the height to 2.5 to 3 inches. In areas of shade, it's better to let the grass grow a little taller to give it a better chance to compete with weeds.

If you have questions about a tall fescue lawn contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Letters To The Editor

Trump Must Be Indicted

Dear Editor,

The bipartisan congressional commission investigating the Jan. 6 coup attempt has found strong evidence that Donald Trump is a criminal. As the hearings reveal, the former president illegally plotted to stay in office after the American people voted to boot him out.

Now he must be indicted.

Trump's criminality is proven not by the words of his enemies, but by the sworn testimony of Republicans he himself appointed or hired — including his own officials and staff, his attorney general William Barr, and Republican election lawyers and campaign personnel.

The evidence indicates Trump committed three major felonies.

First, he corruptly tried to obstruct a joint session of Congress.

The Twelfth Amendment requires a joint session to count the votes and certify the election of the president. When Trump tried to get Vice President Mike Pence to illegally throw out some states' electoral votes, he was attempting to obstruct the proceedings.

Second, Trump incited a riot. He gave an inflammatory speech urging extremists to "show strength and fight like hell" and unleashed his horde on the Capitol, where they threatened to kill or hold hostage those Trump deemed enemies.

Third, Trump attempted election fraud. In a recorded call, Trump demanded Georgia's secretary of state generate thousands of non-existent pro-Trump ballots. "I just want to find 11,780 votes," Trump told him. These are serious crimes.

U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland needs to follow the evidence and honor his oath. If the chief insurrectionist is never charged, the message is plain: presidents are above the law and political violence is acceptable in America. The rule of law must be followed and he must be indicted and tried.

Jim Grazis

End Of Construction

Dear Editor,

Have you ever been through a remodel job on your house and you were perhaps the supervisor making sure every little detail down to the last stroke of a painter's brush marked the end of a job well done? The worries and stress of overseeing a construction site can be overwhelming, but when you are completely satisfied with the end results you can rest from your labor and just enjoy the finished product. Will Graham, grandson of evangelist Billy Graham, wrote a devotion book called "Redeemed for the Longing Soul," and in his book he tells a true story of his grandmother, Ruth Graham, who saw a sign on the side of the road that read: "End Of Construction — Thank you for your patience." Though I wasn't with her at that moment, I can imagine the flicker in her eye as she made the connection between that simple sign and her life. She was a pilgrim, passing through this world as an imperfect child of God. She would grow in her faith and understanding of God, but only know perfection once she passed from this world and stood in His presence.

As such, the words of that roadside sign are now carved into a simple stone brick above her earthly grave. "End of Construction — Thank you for your patience." Ruth knew in her heart that there was more to life than just the here and now. Her faith in Jesus Christ gave her a blessed assurance of a new life, a life in heaven with her Redeemer and Savior. A new life that has no end, only a joyful beginning forevermore in glory. Few find the narrow path that leads to heaven, for many folks are looking for a broader path, but that path leads only to destruction and hell. We sometime fear death as the end, not the beginning of a beautiful journey that will live on and never end. Wrap your mind around that last verse and I pray you ponder deep in your heart the consequences of not following Christ in the here and after. He died for you so you could spend eternity with Him. Please don't let this opportunity slip through your fingers. One chance is all we get in this life. What do you say: Are you ready to join Jesus on that narrow path that leads to heaven? I pray with all my heart you do.

Frank Combs

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor P.O. 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 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.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity Towns Union Counties was founded in 1995 by Elizabeth Lashley. Elizabeth Lashley had volunteered on a home construction build, with another affiliate, and when she returned to Young Harris, she decided to open our local affiliate. Partnering with Sharp Memorial Church, who is a continued donor and supporter of the affiliate, our first ReStore opened its doors on Highway 76. The first Habitat build began in 2000, and since then, the non-profit has flourished.



Habitat Happenings Executive Director Charlotte Randall

For those of you who do not know Bryan Thomas, let me introduce you. Bryan began as ReStore Manager in 2013 for HFHTUC. As my former boss, and now my mentor and friend, Bryan has grown the affiliate to what it is now. Bryan moved here from Atlanta with a background of building over 300 homes in the span of his career. After running the ReStore for a year and half, he became Executive Director.

As Executive Director, Bryan completed five Habitat homes, along with his Habitat builder Solomon Patrick of Patrick Construction, and in 2017 began what we call our Helping Hands program, primarily focusing on handicap ramps for those in need. Bryan dedicated his pre-retirement years to an organization that now helps many families every year. When I ask him why he enjoyed his role of Director, he states the people and the fulfillment of helping those in need is what drove him to dedicate these years to Habitat.

In 2019, HFHTUC was given the news that Highway 76 was planned to expand, and the state needed the land that the ReStore was located on. Bryan approached his friend Karen Brendle, who many of you might remember as the sweetheart who ran The Skillet Café. Karen saw Bryan's vision of a new ReStore and offered a 50-year lease off Wellborn Street where our new location stands. After an interview with Bryan where I brought my dog and baby, Bryan offered me the position of ReStore manager at the new location.

Since the opening of the ReStore at 225 Wellborn Street, HFHTUC has tripled annual sales, and our Helping Hands project has grown to serve more and more families in need within our community. Now, as Executive Director, I have begun my first home build with Phil Freitag of Modern Mountain LLC.

I am honored and excited to be able to serve this community as Director of HFHTUC, and continue the vision and dream of Elizabeth Lashley.

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.

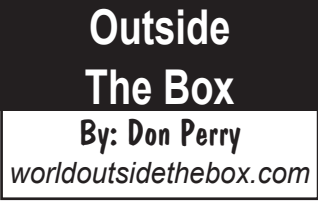
Time for Gratitude

August is here and the mountain is still dressed for June. Green seems inadequate to describe it so we'll say it's lush, verdant, and vigorous like the rain showers that pounded on the tin roof last night. The creek is rushing, and the morning sky is freshly washed blue.

If I had time for the news this morning the best I could hope for would be a renewed sense of gratitude for the blessing of living here. Surely we have our challenges, but here it is peaceful. The weather is gentle. The people are genial, and the land is generous.

Our hearts reach out to the world that is composed of news, to the people who do not know peace, where the weather is harsh, the people are angry and desperate and the land is unforgiving. As John Bradford, upon seeing criminals led to execution in 1553 remarked, "There but for the grace of God go I." Two years later he was executed for heresy. We all get an opportunity to make the news, eventually.

This morning, however, there is grass to mow, and the mower is making that sound again. The tomatoes need to be tied to the stake. There are eggs to collect in the hen house. Business will take us across the mountain this afternoon on a ride to work that makes Atlanta traffic seem like torture. No, there is no time for news. I barely have time to write. There is all the time in the world, however, for gratitude.



Outside The Box By: Don Perry worldoutsidethebox.com

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