

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Fully Sympathetic

Dear Editor,

The editor's note appended to the letter from Dave and Denise Phillips (Government Leadership) in the July 29, 2020, edition was incorrect in asserting that the Governor's order on COVID-19 prohibits local election officials from mandating that election workers wear masks during the August 11 runoff election. It does not.

Election workers are "Critical Infrastructure" workers under the order. The provision on Critical Infrastructure states "measures may include, but shall not be limited to the following" (emphasis added). Because the order does not represent the limits of what may be required, election officials would not be inconsistent with it by requiring workers to wear face masks. In fact, later in the order, a provision on Critical Infrastructure specifically states that "Providing Personal Protective Equipment as available and appropriate to the function and location of the Worker" should be implemented. It is hard to imagine a function and location more conducive to the spread of a dangerous virus than a crowded polling place if workers and the public are not properly masked. Just to emphasize this point, the Governor's order specifically mandates certain workers, such as restaurant wait staff, wear face masks when they interact with the public.

As a former member of the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration, I was deeply troubled by official action described in the Phillipses' letter. I fully sympathize with them and regret the loss of two civic-minded volunteers at a time when the county is struggling to fully staff its polling places.

The decision not to require protective measures was improperly premised on an incorrect interpretation of the Governor's order. The Towns County Herald should correct its editor's note.

Jim Powell

Editor's Note: As pointed out by Mr. Powell, the editor's note on the July 29 letter from Dave and Denise Phillips was incorrect.

Termination

Dear Editor,

Under President Trump's direction, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently terminated the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) regulation issued in 2015 under the Obama administration. The AFFH was aimed to expand federal influence over America's suburbs and the main underlying purpose was to allow federal bureaucrats to dictate where a community's low-income residents will live. This was another tool (eg Obamacare) that Obama created before leaving office to fundamentally transform America by undercutting the political and economic independence of our suburbs. AFFH allowed bureaucrats in Washington to control zoning laws, the placement of transportation and business districts, and the drawing of school districts. In other words, almost every important local governmental responsibility could, under AFFH, fall under control of the federal government. With the election just a few months away it is important to understand the consequences of a renewal of the AFFH if Hunkered/Bunkered-Downed Joe Biden is elected president.

Tim Groza

Thank Goodness!

Dear Editor,

Thank goodness I live in Towns County! Given all the stuff I have watched on the news, we are holding our own during the Covid-19 outbreak. I feel we have managed to do very well in this outbreak. I can still shop as needed for basic needs such as food, supplies, and a normal lifestyle. We have visited local restaurants, I can shop for hardware and normal daily needs. We do not have the riots many larger cities are experiencing.

Thank goodness I live in an area that allows normal commerce to occur! Our police and Sheriff officers are still here to protect us. I support them as well! This is a great place to live and thrive. I can't think of any other place I would want to live.

Towns County Rocks!

Craig Earon

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.**

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"Oh, I'm confident the government will solve all the COVID budget woes."



"What worries me is I know just how they will do it."



A Cold Solder Connection

New Zealand just marked the passage of 100 days free from Covid-19, and we congratulate them. We can take heart that the virus can be overcome. We can, perhaps, accept a measure of chagrin for our own handling of the crisis,

and by "chagrin," I mean "disappointment or anger, especially when caused by failure or mistake." New Zealand reacted quickly and decisively at the beginning of the pandemic. In late March, when only 100 people had been infected, they imposed a strict lockdown and stopped the virus in its tracks. For the past three months, their only cases have been travelers returning from abroad. New Zealand's rallying cry was "go hard and go early." Their success has been attributed to a combination of science, coherent leadership and a population willing to endure short term discomfort for long term gain. Read that again, slowly. While New Zealand enjoys a return to normalcy and an economy rebounding from losses less severe than the rest of the west, here at home we're still indulging in conspiracy theories and arguing about masking or not masking like Lilliput and Blefuscu fought over which end of an egg should be cracked. While we argued and dithered, the Kiwis embraced the suck and took their medicine. It worked. Quickly. And they did it without losing their autonomy to the secret illuminati conspiracy intent on destroying America with six-inch squares of fabric.

"Not a fair comparison! New Zealand only has 5 million residents, and we have 315 million!" That's a fact. But the truth is, there are rural counties in Georgia with a population density like New Zealand but a death rate that is higher than many metropolitan areas. Try again.

"It's Trump's fault. If he had...or if he hadn't..." There is some truth there, but not the whole truth. The president did minimize the problem at first, and passed the buck to the governors at a time when national leadership was needed. I know, Orange Man Bad, but he's not the first president to minimize a crisis in an election year. Every politician knows that we vote from short term memory. That doesn't make it right, but we're left with one less "unprecedented" to break the news.

Many of our governors get failing marks too. They had full authority to address the problems, but not enough real bucks were passed with the accountability buck, so they lacked the resources. Some governors passed the buck to their mayors; some turned their nursing homes into death camps, and some decided to waste time and credibility arguing with their mayors. Funny, how that "states' rights" and "distribution of power" philosophy seems to evaporate on its way down the food chain, but those of us standing at the end of the line have received mixed messages since the beginning. We'll try again.

"I blame all those republicans who refused to wear masks." Nope. Try again. Only 73% percent of democrats are wearing masks (unless they are on vacation or protesting) and 60% of republicans, although that second number is likely to tick up, especially among older Americans.

"I don't care what 'your' scientists say. This is all a hoax to see how far they can go to control us. The flu kills a lot more people even though there is a vaccine for that. There's a doctor in Barbados who says masks aren't effective. Google it and see for yourself!"

My answer to that is simply: New Zealand. Did the hard thing. Sky didn't fall. Life returning to normal. Next!

"Why do you hate America!?" When you hear that, it often means you've struck a nerve. It's painful when the facts challenge your beliefs, isn't it! I love this country, and you do too or you wouldn't have read this far. Some of the most talented, generous and compassionate people in the world live here, and the system of government we developed is the best model for a free society ever devised. When you genuinely love someone, you love them enough to tell them when they have done wrong. You don't try to destroy them so you can start over with new friends or a new family. You lift them up and try to help them heal. All of the alleged culprits mentioned above may have contributed to our ongoing troubles to some degree, and we are dealing with an unknown virus, a chimera that has proven difficult to understand or predict. Feel better now? Well, New Zealand then. And while they return to normal, we argue passionately about fabric squares and skin pigment and the meaning of words. We're pressured to erase our history, regardless of the cautionary tales that accompany it, and educated fools attempt to deconstruct our very language to reprogram our thinking from the foundation up, and all of this is delivered to us through our click-for-profit pixel peddlers.

"America is a melting pot," or so we've heard for most of our lives. It certainly looks like that when we browse the pixel images or channel surf the pixel programming. But here in the real world, we have functioned more like a cold solder connection - shiny on the surface but unable to conduct electricity.

You get a cold solder connection when your soldering tip isn't hot enough. This can happen when you're too tired or lazy to properly maintain your equipment. For a generation or two we indulged in contentment without properly maintaining the equipment necessary for the next generations to enjoy the same benefits, and our bench is covered with cheap tools peddled by Washington and Wall Street.

As always, we have a choice. We can affect the necessary repairs. We can accept only quality tools. Or not. If we don't, if we continue to dissipate our energies in fruitless argument, instead of achieving a melting pot we'll endure another decade of smoldering slag, and our cold solder connection will be insufficient to conduct the business of the next crisis. Or we'll kindle a fire so hot it will create some unknown new alloy while destroying much of what we hold dear. There are some who prefer the latter, and we immediately know two things about such people: They have no skin in the game, and they expect their own skins will somehow remain beyond the reach of the flames.

The Middle Path
By: Don Perry
onthemiddlepath.com

Fall Gardening

Do you usually have a fall garden? Now is the time to start thinking about one. There are some benefits to having a fall garden that we'll get in to. Let's talk about what vegetable crops and cover crops are an option for a fall garden and how to start your fall garden.

Cover crops are planted in the fall and grow throughout the winter into early spring. Cover crops are beneficial to soil health and are often used in organic production. I like to think of the soil as a muscle in the body. If you work a muscle too hard or with only one exercise then you may injure the muscle by straining it or even tearing it. However, by diversifying your exercises and making sure that you're eating properly for muscle growth you can grow stronger. Soil also requires development over time, and cover crops can help with that. Common crops are clovers and cereal crops like cereal rye, black oats, and wheat. Come springtime they can be tilled into the soil or laid down so that you can plant into them. Planting cover crops can help to develop organic matter in the soil, reduce erosion, suppress weeds,

and conserve soil moisture. Around Labor Day is the ideal time to plant cover crops in our area.

Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, turnips, radishes, spinach, lettuce, beans, and onions are some good options for a fall garden. For fall gardens it is important to use mulch to protect the plants from the frost. You may need to get another soil test done on your garden to see if you need to add any fertilizer for the coming crop. Ideally, you want the plants to have 50 - 60 days to mature before the first frost. Our average first frost date is mid-October. That makes mid-August a good time to plant.

There are a couple of benefits to planting in the fall that you don't see in the summer. One of these is there are fewer insect pests around. That means you won't need to spray as many insecticides. If you are trying to grow your garden organically that is a very good thing! There will also be fewer diseases that you have to contend with in the fall. Diseases like hot, humid conditions. As the temperature drops in the coming months diseases will become less and less of a problem. Winter weeds can still be a problem but they are not as much of a pest as summertime weeds. Use mulch to suppress weeds.

Pansies and violas are an option for flowering plants that will last through the winter and keep their flowers. Plant pansies mid-September once the temperatures have cooled down.

Gardening in the spring means working through diseases and insects. In the fall the biggest challenge will be from the temperature. As the temperature drops rapidly selecting varieties of crops that can stand the cold will be important. It can be extremely rewarding to see green growing around your house after everything else has turned brown.

If you have any questions about growing your fall garden contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



Watching and Working
Jacob Williams

Before Mechanization

Let's try not to forget this history of what our Army's Calvary troops were "born" from. A great era of tough men, and their wonderful steeds.

On March 9, 1916, the notorious Pancho Villa and about 500 Mexicans crossed our border into Columbus, N.M., and killed eighteen Americans and devastated the town, burning homes and almost destroying the entire town.

This cross-border raid conducted as guerrilla warfare is documented as Villa's need for horses and supplies. This certainly was not these terrorists first raid into America, but this incident enraged President Woodrow Wilson to the point that on March 15, he sent a full fledged Calvary raid into Mexico to put an end to Pancho Villa and his felonious assaults upon America.

This Punitive Expedition consisted of columns of the 7th, 10th, 11th, and 13th Calvary regiments crisscrossing all over Chihuahua, in search of our enemy. This first period was known as the "pursuit period". The 11th rode into Parral, a full 400 miles south of the border. Lots of small battles were fought until our valiant men astride their great war horses rode Pancho Villa's army into the ground, never to threaten America and our people again.

Our last troopers to leave Mexico and return to Columbus was on February 5, 1917. Our entry into WW1 against Germany began on April 6 of that year, thus American interest in that Calvary raid has been almost lost to the dust bins of history.

Also on March 16 the day following our Calvary entry into Mexico, Captain T.F. Dodd flew out of Columbus in his unarmed airplane, a Curtiss JN-4 known as a "Jenny". They were on a fruitless recon mission as part of what was to become our USAF.

Old troopers used to say the Calvary was only half man, the other half was his horse.

These men KNEW their mounts and during training they were required to pick them.

A good mount, could march 20-30 miles per day, day after day through treacherous terrain.

Farmers and ranchers were employed to care for, raise and breed horse of all breeds resulting in prices of up to \$150 each for those picked by our soldiers. Many of today's great horse are descendants of that program and are said to look like quarter horses.

By 1940 the Army had 12 regiments of Calvary, the men and material to maintain them plus National guard regiments.

The last U.S. Calvary regiment to "dismount" in June 1944 was the 124th. The last fine Calvary horse named Chief died in 1968 and is buried at Fort Riley.

And just in case you missed it, my own "Alma mater" the United States Coast Guard celebrated it's 230th birthday this past August 4th. Two fine brothers, both Veterans called to wish me a happy birthday, Coastie!

And like the U.S. Calvary, times and certain things have changed since when I and others served when we learned how to "....Adapt, Overcome, and Conquer....." Or as they taught me, those great WWII mentors, "DO THE BEST YOU CAN WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT!" - *Semper Paratus*



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran

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