

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Knowing Elzie Jackson

From a most wonderful guest-writer!

The Veterans' Corner Scott Drummond USCG Veteran



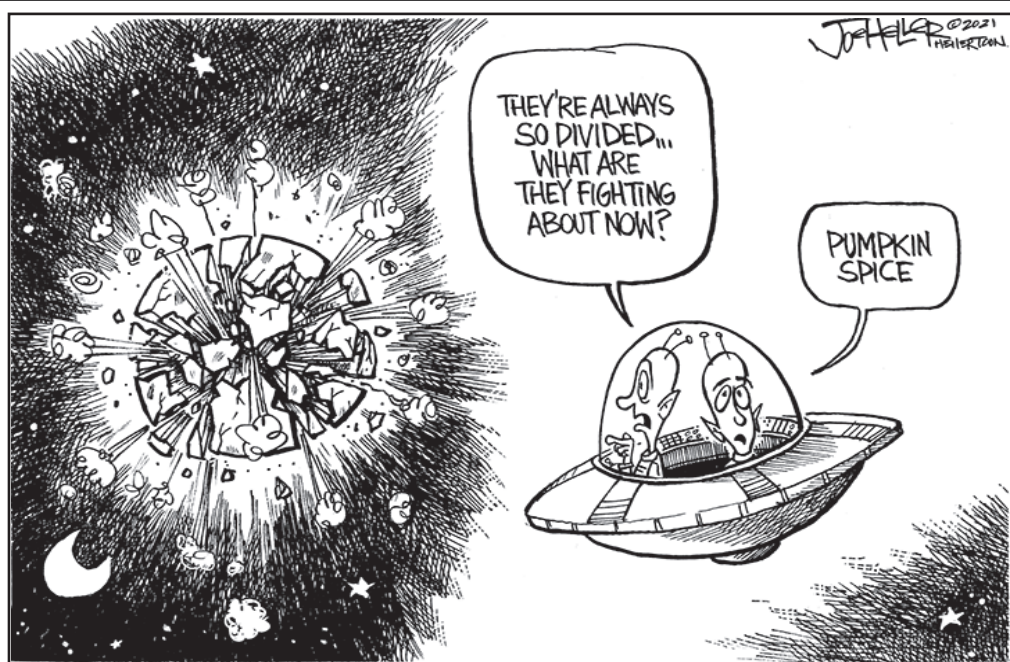
I am taking over Veterans Corner this week because I have something to say and I need someone to listen. I want to tell about a boy I went to high school with in Duluth, GA. His name was Elzie Jackson. He died a couple of weeks ago. Elzie graduated with my sister Brenda the year behind me in 1969. I cannot claim to be a close friend of his as I was not. I knew Elzie and things about him and that is the extent of my knowledge. He was a football player, he was funny, he worked for and retired from the United Postal Service, and had a couple of dates with my sister. He first married Gloria, a girl in my class and a star basketball player, but it did not last, he went to Vietnam, he married Jo Ann and they stayed together until his death. And his sister's son bought my 13 year old 1969 Camaro. Sure do wish I still had that Camaro! I knew Elzie had health problems. Here's what I didn't know. After reading his notice at the Funeral Home in Duluth, I learned that Elzie was a recipient of a Purple Heart and he had two Bronze Stars. I asked my brother Buzz, who has an uncanny ability to remember just about anything, and learned that many of Elzie's health problems might have been triggered by exposure to Agent Orange. Certainly highly probable.

I'm sorry Elzie... You were a hero! I think that the point I am trying to get to here is that these boys and girls, and I do mean boys and girls, willingly took up an oath to defend the United States of America, die for each other and die for all of us walking around everyday, breathing freedom. They are amongst us every day.

Attending the September 11th Remembrance on the Hiawassee Square I'm seeing all the firemen and policemen from Towns County and here again we have a courageous congregation willing to defend and protect. I am humbled by memories of September 11, 2001 the day the United States came under direct attack and am grateful to be in the company of these Towns County Heroes. They are the ones that would run towards and not away from danger to help others.

The new Veteran banners are in place for the coming year and as always Liz Ordiales and the city of Hiawassee have created an amazing tribute. I don't know all these folks but I thank them for the freedoms we cherish. It's impossible to know the history of all that touch our lives, but I will try to be more mindful. Thank you, Ash, Brandy, Charley, Mel, Bud, Scott, Dwight, Todd, John, Bart, Frank, Wayne..... these are just a few among the many that have taken the oath and served this country.

Today, I thank you Elzie Jackson and God Bless America. I believe she's a keeper! -Semper Paratus



Protecting your Home and Business from Wildfire

Wildfires are a risk throughout the U.S. and pose a significant threat to buildings and lives in wildfire-prone areas. As more and more businesses expand into the wildland-urban interface—or WUI, a term used to designate wildfire-prone areas where homes and businesses are also located—the wildfire risk to businesses will also grow. In this environment, business protection must take into account both the materials and design features of the building, as well as the selection, location and maintenance of landscape plants, including grasses, shrubs, bushes and trees.



This article by the Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) provides an overview of wildfire hazards, mitigation strategies, and useful resources to help protect your business from the threat of wildfire. Most people associate wildfire damage with direct flame contact from the wildfire as it burns past the building.

However, buildings also can be damaged or destroyed when they are exposed to burning embers and/or radiant heat. Building ignitions during wildfires occur when a component of a building is exposed to one or more of these three wildfire exposures.

Burning Embers - Burning embers and wind-blown burning embers in particular, are the most frequent cause of building ignitions.

These embers are generated by the burning wildfire itself, as well as by combustible items the wildfire has previously ignited, such as landscape plants, which includes grasses, shrubs, bushes and trees. Importantly, burning embers can travel for long distances before landing on or near a building.

Embers can ignite buildings in several ways: Embers can ignite combustible construction materials directly when accumulating on or immediately adjacent to them. Combustible construction materials are those that ignite and burn such as wood, plastic, and wood-plastic products used in decking and siding. Embers can enter a building through openings, such as an open window or attic vent, and ignite combustible items inside the building.

Direct Flame Contact - Direct flame contact refers to actual flames from the wildfire coming into contact with buildings or combustible items attached to or near the building.

Radiant Heat - Fire generates radiant heat and if it is high enough and the duration is long enough, radiant heat can ignite a combustible product or break the glass in a window. Additionally, exposures to lower levels of radiant heat can preheat materials, making them easier to ignite from a direct flame contact exposure.

Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) represent the wildfire hazard in a particular area based on an evaluation of the plants and landscaping, fire history, slope and other terrain features that may impact the growth and spread of fire.

Building vulnerabilities are generally addressed on a component-by-component basis, and typically include the roof, exterior walls, windows, deck and other attachments, vents and gutters, as well as design features that can affect the vulnerability of a given component.

Roofs - Since the roof is a large, relatively horizontal surface covering the building, it is often considered the most vulnerable component, particularly from an ember exposure perspective.

Fire ratings for roof coverings are either Class A, B or C. IBHS recommends a Class A covering.

For low-slope roofs, a Class A-rated roof cover includes testing and rating of the entire roof system assembly, which includes the roof cover, insulation, vapor or air barriers, and the type of deck. Examples of roof systems considered to be Class A regardless of the deck type include built-up roofing and ballasted single-ply membranes.

There are a number of Class A-rated steep-slope roof coverings, including asphalt composition shingles, clay tile and steel.

Some Class A tile designs provide for an opening at the eave end and ridge. These openings should be plugged with a noncombustible material to minimize entry of embers in the area under the roof covering.

Windows - Using dual-paned windows with tempered glass will reduce the vulnerability of windows. Operational windows should have screens covering those sections that can open.

Vents - At a minimum, vents should be covered with 1/8-inch noncombustible mesh screening. This will minimize the size of embers that can enter into the attic or crawlspace area. Vents that are perpendicular to the flow of wind, such as a gable end vent or those in under-eave blocking, are more vulnerable to ember entry.

Ridge vents that are rated to resist the entry of wind-driven rain or vents in boxed-in under-eave construction are better options.

Exterior Walls - Noncombustible siding materials such as concrete and brick will provide the greatest fire protection from flames, embers, and radiant heat. The distance between the ground and the bottom of the siding on the exterior wall affects a building's vulnerability, particularly when walls are made of materials that can ignite.

Be Safe, be Aware and Be Firewise! For more information on wildfires, contact Frank Riley, Executive Director, Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council at www.info.ccrd@gmail.com.

Septic Smart

Maintaining a healthy septic system is very important. Fixing a septic system that is damaged from improper use can be expensive and time consuming. Many homes in the mountains are on a septic system, and sometimes the homeowner may be someone who has never had a septic system before. Let's talk a bit about septic systems and how to maintain them.



One in five households in the US are on a septic system. One third of people in the Southeast are on a septic system. Septic systems provide several benefits. One of these is that a decentralized waste management system reduces the risk of disease transmission. A septic system also has environmental benefits because it removes pollution from surface water and recharges ground water and aquifers.

There is also a cost benefit because it reduces the need for communities to build large treatment facilities. A septic system that is properly constructed and maintained provides excellent wastewater treatment. State and county governments regulate septic systems.

There are a few different types of septic systems but generally, they all have a pipe bringing wastewater from the house to the septic tank. In the tank, solids will float to the bottom, where microbes break them down over time. There will be another pipe that flows to the drainfield. The drainfield handles the effluent that comes off the tank. This effluent goes into the soil, where microbes filter it.

One problem that you can have with your septic drainfield is roots clogging the stones and penetrating the pipes in your drainfield. Don't plant trees on your drainfield. Also, avoid parking cars or other heavy machinery on it, as this can damage your pipes. Keep stormwater drains away from your drainfield. Excess water in the drainfield makes it difficult for soil to process all the water that is flowing through it.

Another thing to do is to make sure that you have properly disposed of waste. The only things that should go down the toilet are human waste and toilet paper. Be careful about what you put down your sink. Toxins or bleach will kill the microbes that digest and treat the waste in your septic system. If you have a clogged sink, try to use a snake or boiling water to clean it. Never pour cooking oil or grease down the drain. If you have a garbage disposal try to limit its use. This will reduce the amount of fat and grease that enter your drainfield and clog it up.

Another tip to help your septic system is to use your water efficiently. High efficiency toilets and showerheads can reduce the amount of stress that you put on your septic system. Select the proper load size on your washing machine to avoid overloading your septic system. If you can, spread your clothes washing throughout the week. Doing all of your laundry in one day will put a lot of water through your septic system at one time.

Finally, a professional should inspect the average household septic system at least every three years. Typically, it will need to be pumped every 3-5 years.

The size of your septic system is based on the size of the house and the number of bathrooms. Adding on to your house and using more water than the septic system was designed to process can lead to problems. You can tell if your septic tank is full from the odor, sluggish drains, standing water in the drainfield, and sewage backing up into the house.

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

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 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 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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Letters to The Editor

Accountability

Dear Editor,

Number 1: If I were to give an enemy firearms of any caliber or size, especially \$80 billion worth, could I get away with that? Not according to the Treason Act 18 U.S. Code 2381. I am guessing I would be in a whole wad of trouble. So my question is this: will the POTUS be free of this, and if so... how come?

Number 2: If I were to bring in illegal aliens across our borders and transport them to anywhere I desire in the USA without notification or permission, could I get away with that? Not according to the Immigration and Nationality Act (I.N.A.) Section 274(A)(1)(A)(ii). Again, I am guessing I would be in a whole wad of trouble. So my question is this: will the POTUS be free of this, and if so... how come?

Number 3: If I were to give great amounts of money to support rioting, burning of buildings and do bodily harm to others, could I get away with that? Not according to 18 U.S. Code 2101. So my question is this: why do the Democrat supporters and George Soros get away with it... and how come?

My final question is simply thing: why are these laws on the books and not being acted on or enforced? I think I know why, or at least somewhat — we have turned into a weak, gutless, no-spine nation... soooooo whatsa think???????

Gary Lee

Ashamed of Christ

Dear Editor,

In the book of Mark in the Bible Chapter 8:38, Jesus is telling His followers that if you be ashamed of Me, I will be ashamed of you. As faithful Christians, we must be committed to the cause of Christ no matter the cost to ourselves. We cannot be idle or lazy in our pursuit concerning the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Christ, Jesus. In view of what Christ has done for us at the cross and what He promises to do for us in the future, we ought not to be standing on the sidelines, twiddling our thumbs and indulging in criticism.

Christians find it so easy to criticize others, but specifically, what are you doing to get out God's word? That is the important question in this hour, as every born-again believer in Christ and every pastor should be preaching exactly what folks need to hear, not a feel-good sermon that has no real value or worth, but a sermon that would stir each heart to want to go out from their service and tell others the good news of Jesus Christ.

Where has the passion gone, or did you ever have it when you first got saved and you wanted to tell others how Jesus had changed your life for the better and where you were headed after this life was over? Being ashamed of Jesus Christ and His message of salvation seems to be very popular in the days we are living, but there will always be consequences for our actions, and having Jesus Christ be ashamed of us is heartbreaking indeed. We are not here to judge anyone, especially other Christians that are working hard to proclaim God's Holy Word.

Examine yourselves and see if you are in God's will as you surrender everything over to Him in prayer and supplication to bring praise, honor and glory to Our heavenly Father in heaven.

Frank. F. Combs

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