

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Still Rolling My Eyes

Rahm Emanuel, Obama's Chief of Staff once said "Never let a good crisis go to waste", meaning "politicize crises to your advantage". Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Propaganda Minister once said "If you tell a lie big enough and repeat it often, people will eventually believe it." Those two quotes sum up the Democrat playbook. They have shamelessly politicized the Covid pandemic by making up a huge whopper and creating an "echo chamber" in the press. Their whopper: "President Trump failed to act early to avert the pandemic."

Biden went as far as to blame Trump for each and every death from Covid, which he said at the time was 250 million. That's 2/3 of our population.

They're ignoring Trump's action to close down travel from China and Europe early on while the Democrats were calling him xenophobic for doing so. They ignore the massive mobilization with US industry to produce ventilators and PPE, expand hospitals (Navy hospital ships in NY and LA as well as mobile units on the ground). Democrat governors even praised Trump's actions until they were presumably reminded this is an election year.

They ignore the fact that this Corona Virus was new and largely unknown to the scientific community early this year. Yet they delight in quoting early statements about there being low risk to individuals. This was the medical guidance at the time. Of course, prominent Democrats from both coasts were saying the same thing. They also ignore the administration mobilizing the medical industry to develop tests, treatments and a vaccine.

Finally they twist Trump's words to imply the administration was withholding important information from the public. Anyone who has paid attention to the communication from the task force, which included Dr Fauci and Dr Birx know that the administration has been very transparent on this issue.

The administration provided guidance to the states. The states are responsible for implementation, which is reasonable and consistent with the law.

By the way, "echo chamber" is a term laughingly applied to the press by the Obama/Biden administration when they were selling the treasonous Iran Nuclear Deal to the country. You know, the one where a Obama and Biden sent \$150 BILLION to IRAN!

Democrats seem to be willing to do or say anything for power. Beware when their lips are moving (or keyboards clacking).

Jim Soltys

The Presidential Election

Dear Editor,

In a little over a month, the presidential election will determine the future course of our nation. For certain, I will be voting for the principles that made this country great. I am voting for Constitutional government. I am voting for a strong military. I am voting for a vibrant economy. I am voting for the right to keep and bear arms. I am voting for the freedom to worship. I am voting for our borders to be open to everyone who enters under our law and closed to everyone who would circumvent the law. I am voting for the Electoral College so that a few heavily populated liberal areas do not control the outcome of future elections. I am voting for a Supreme Court that interprets the Constitution rather than rewrites it. I am voting for the sanctity of life from conception to birth and after.

And of course, there are some things I am voting against. I am voting against open borders. I am voting against a rampant welfare system that enslaves it's recipients. I am voting against socialism, in all of its forms, including redistribution of wealth, reparations and increased governmental control over all aspects of our life. There is really only one candidate who meets the criteria outlined above and that candidate is President Donald Trump.

Tim Groza

Buying Votes with Medicare Money

Dear Editor,

Once again we see an irresponsible President attempting to corrupt our political system through whatever means he can devise and regardless of the consequences. President Trump's latest effort at vote buying is a plan to spend \$7 billion of public money on issuing \$200 drug discount cards to 33 million of the 44 million seniors on Medicare.

If you are a senior on Medicare, as I am, you should be incensed at this insult to our intelligence and integrity. I hope I speak for all seniors in Towns County when I say, "MY VOTE WILL NOT BE BOUGHT."

His plan to issue discount cards flies in the face of good policy ("A one-time savings card will neither provide lasting help, nor advance the fundamental reforms necessary to help seniors better afford their medicines," according to a spokesman for the drug industry trade group PhRMA.). But that's not the primary reason for concern.

It also reverses long-standing Republican consensus on future programs because it relies for its funding on savings from a future program that would tie drug prices paid by Medicare in the United States to prices paid in other countries. When Democrats have proposed such a linkage to make drugs more affordable for seniors, Republicans and the drug industry have fought it off in favor of allowing the marketplace to set prices.

Finally, it follows a pattern of debt financing where the promise of future savings is used to pay for current spending. It is a pattern most often used to explain away the impact of tax cuts without a concurrent reduction in spending on existing programs, and is the reason our national debt (currently at more than \$24 TRILLION) is approaching parity with the GDP for the first time since World War II.

I am a fiscally conservative Democrat. A point of pride is that I worked for a Member of the U.S. House Budget Committee at the one time in recent history when Congress not only produced a balanced budget but actually generated surpluses and began paying down the national debt. One of the things we fought against was the tendency for some, both Democrats and Republicans, to throw a party with unrealized gains (that is spending public money while relying on future savings to pay the costs).

I do not enjoy writing these letters, but I feel compelled because the outrages of the current President will not cease. But, more than that, a strong two-party system is critical to reaching sound government policies that can unite our country. For that reason, I write to head off the demise of the Republican Party before it is usurped by its Trumpican wing. Its demise is brought closer by this latest vote-buying proposal that demonstrates the Trumpicans do not hold any Republican values as sacred. Instead, its adherents center their position on the deification of Donald J. Trump, a man without morals, conscience, integrity, love of country, or respect for our Constitution.

David Plunkett



The Locals

I was camping in New Mexico one summer and I had driven into a small town for some supplies. In the check-out line ahead of me two guys were having a conversation. One of them told me they were planning to do some hiking around the area cliff dwellings. Their Burberry shorts and Birkenstock sandals suggested that these guys had limited experience hiking in the desert, and the Gucci Aviator sunglasses screamed "tourist."

My suspicions were confirmed when one of the guys said something disparaging about "the locals." The young Hispanic girl at the register looked uncomfortable but she didn't say anything. When the two guys left the store I said to her, "I hope they take a nap under a Cholla tree." We both laughed. A Cholla is a cactus which occasionally drops grape-like clusters of spine covered pods on unwitting visitors.

There was no one else in the market at the time so I talked with the girl for a few minutes. She told me her ancestors had lived in that part of the southwest since the 1600's, but the cliff dwellings had been abandoned for hundreds of years before that. I learned a bit of history and the location of a few outstanding landmarks that only the "locals" knew about. The investment of ten minutes of my time in another human being changed the course of my entire trip that summer.

Sadly, I've heard the term "the locals" used in just about every part of the country where I've stayed long enough to hear it. The phrase is an unfortunate byproduct of our mobile American culture. It suggests things about us that we don't like to admit, about class and the attitudes of the affluent and the economically mobile. It even shines light on the electoral map during elections.

Yes, and it cuts both ways. When I'm waiting behind a line of out-of-state license plates on my way to the post office and grumbling about the "tourons" (that's a cross between a tourist and a moron, if you didn't know), I'm allowing the legacy reptile software in my brain to guide my thoughts, and disregarding the human stories of all the passengers in those vehicles who come here to spend money and keep my property taxes low. Some escaped here from our own urban cliff dwellings. Some have made no less of a journey than the pioneers. Every one of them has been a "local" somewhere.

Our brains operating on automatic pilot can take us on some very unpleasant journeys. The brain is designed to process a tremendous amount of data provided by our senses, filter that through our memories and quickly identify friend or foe, safety or threat. If we don't consciously manage that process, we are subject to being led by our fears and making wrong conclusions.

Today I'm reminded of that great line, I think Maggie Smith said it: "I know she's judgmental. I can tell by looking at her." It would be nice if that only applied to the two rude guys in that checkout line, but I have to include myself in the joke. We're all included.

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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Lichen

Have you seen moss growing on trees? Lichen is the term used for the blue green, papery growth that is often found on the bark of trees and other perennials. Sometimes folks are concerned over the growth of lichen, because they think it may be damaging their tree. Most of the time, this is not the case. Let's talk about what lichens are, what causes them, and what you can do to control them, if necessary.

Lichens are really made up of a couple of different organisms. They usually will have a fungus and an algae. These organisms work together in a relationship that is mutually beneficial. Together these organisms produce the thallus, which is the leaf like growth that people see and recognize as lichen. Each organism has its own role in the relationship. The fungus provides a physical structure for growth, because the algae is slimy and has no structure. The fungus also provides water and minerals from the air or the material that the lichen is growing on. The algae are capable of photosynthesis, so they provide the carbohydrates needed for life. Some algae are also able to pull nitrogen from the atmosphere that the lichen need for development. Together they are able to combine and sustain life.

Lichens grow all over the world. Different species will grow on different surfaces. For instance lichen that you see on a rock will not grow on a tree. Different colors are also possible. Lichen will begin to grow more on a plant if that plant has lost some of its leaves. When leaves fall from a tree, more sunlight is able to penetrate to the branches and trunk of the tree that will enable to growth of more lichen. Lichen is an opportunistic grower, meaning that healthy, actively growing plants will not have as much lichen on them. If there is an abundant amount of lichen on a plant that means there could be something that is stressing your plant, allowing the opportunistic lichen to grow. That could be a nutritional deficiency, a root disease, or an insect pest among other things.

Lichen does not kill plants. An abundant amount of lichen can be an indicator that something else is affecting the plant. Because lichen doesn't damage plants, I don't like to recommend products to kill it. You can remove lichen manually by gently scraping it from the bark. If you see a tree that has a lot of lichen growing on it carefully examine the plant. Here are some things to look for. Has the plant already lost its leaves? Are there holes in the bark from insects boring? Has the plant been receiving enough water? Are the roots turning black or are there mushrooms growing around the base of the tree? These are all questions that will help you determine if your plant is in decline and get to the root of the issue.

If you have questions about lichen growing on your plants contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

UGA extension
UNION COUNTY

Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



One of God's Lambs

Part I - After waiting several weeks for Jim Lamb to return from his home in Sarasota, FL, I finally was able to secure a seat with him at our combination VFW #7807 /American Legion post #23.

It was indeed well worth the wait! Having known Jim for several years and witnessed the donations he made to our post, I had no idea of his life history other than he was another very gentlemanly brother of our Veterans community.

Jim Lamb was born on June 6, 1943 in Miami Beach, FL. Through circumstances far beyond his control he became homeless at the age of twelve (12)! Didn't slow him down an iota, like a lot of folks who think they have it bad today. So let's not hear any crying and moaning about growing up poor!

Jim waited tables, washed dishes, worked in grocery stores, helped on construction job sites, and took any job he could. His transportation was shoe leather and a bicycle. All of his positive thinking and efforts gained a lot of folk's attention who became proud to know this young kid. He accomplished much, all the while living in a tent for a year and a half! One of the many people who knew Jim soon decided to help Jim by selling him a trailer home, already set up, paying his electric and water bills and collecting only five dollars a month in payments for purchase of Jim's new home.

Eventually Jim paid off the "handshake note" and the fine gentleman who arraigned for Jim to move out of his tent and into a nice trailer home signed over the deed. So being the thankful soul that he is still today, Jim enlisted in our USAF in 1961, and signed the deed back over to the original owner as he left to go travel the world, serving our nation in the AF. Jim learned early on that to receive, one needs to give. He had lived in Miami Beach, Homestead, and was to make his final home in Sarasota and eventually sharing his summer months with us, here in Towns County.

Jim served three tours in Vietnam as an advisor, in liaison to our US Army and actually living in the villages with the South Vietnamese farmers and peasants that he sought to mentor against the oncoming onslaught of North Vietnamese, Chinese and Soviet backed violent Socialist (Communist) aggression. He learned to love these gentile, peaceful people. Jim also served in Thailand, also a "very nice country". His direct boss was a South Vietnamese Colonel, who became fast friends with Jim. It was a sad moment for all when his Colonel lost his life, having given much of it for the freedom and liberty of the Vietnamese people, that we so often abuse and take for granted here at home. These were the years of 1963-64-67-68-72-1973. Jim opted to retain his rank as E-7, in lieu of being promoted to E-8 Master Sergeant as he decided to return home to work many jobs again in and around South Florida. Let's not forget, he married his wonderful wife, Margaret! Please read part 2 in next week's TCH).

Semper Paratus

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