

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Finest Americans

Within Our County Lives Many Fine Americans

Our unique small town America, Towns County, GA is

blessed to have a contingent of America's solid citizens, our Veterans of all five branches (now six) of our nation's military. It's not difficult to recognize, honor & respect these men & women, who may be standing right beside you. It's amazingly easy to give a special smile, grin, handshake or "thank you" to anyone you see, especially a stranger who may be recognized by a particular cap, hat or tee shirt they may be wearing as a humble measure of their pride. You just might make a great friend!

Personally I believe that each & every day should be Veterans' Day. Officially always on the Eleventh Day of the Eleventh Month at the Eleventh Hour.

Our fine, salt of the earth folks, gave willingly a few years or many years of their lives doing jobs that many wouldn't, couldn't, or refused to even try, for all of us and our great nation, the United States of America. Conscription (the draft) into military service, ended in 1973, but did not deter our men & women who realized we all are a part of something far greater than themselves, as many amongst us volunteered to commit to serve as needed. Protecting & serving our nation is a forever thing. Ain't "no little thing", either! As long as mankind inhabits our planet earth there will always be chaos both natural & man-made, thus our military is on call 24/7/365 to defend and/or rescue both fellow patriots & civilians from nefarious forces.

Our WW2 vets, my mentors as I grew into a young man meant the world to me. We have been blessed to live with a few, here, including several Iwo Jima vets, fine, funny, knowledgeable, wonderful guys. As of today, many of these wonderful folks of our Greatest Generation have been called Home by our Supreme Commander.

Towns County, is home to our Veterans' of Foreign Wars, VFW Aux, American Legion family including SAL, Riders, and Auxiliary plus many other friends for Veteran events & fellowship. Blessed we shall be on Veterans' Day November 11, 2022, when hopefully we will see so many gathering at our Veterans' Memorial Park to honor some of our greatest Americans. Remember our Veterans Memorial Park was made possible by past Commissioner Bill Kendall and his contingent of Towns County citizens & students of Towns County HS decades ago. And that support of our Veterans Park continues today by Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw and many volunteers and friends.

Our park continues to thrive via a committee of veterans, from five branches of our services striving to continue inscriptions of fellow servicemen & women's names of Towns County residence who leave this earth.

Imagine what life would be like without those who have sacrificed so much? While it is an impossibility to know them all, we must certainly honor them all. Those who gave or have given their very lives should matter no less to any of us. For they are true Heroes! Those jobs, sometimes harsh, dirty, long hours, no sleep, keeping machinery running, planes flying, communications systems up missing meals & showers, missing family & loved ones, willing to give all, possibly watching brothers in uniform suffer & die are jobs that were imperative to be done and will never cease as long as there exists a United States of America. Our Sovereign Republic will survive for so long as we and our greatest men and women, willing to serve in any of our military capacities are willing to do what it takes to preserve her. -Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Rich Get Richer

Dear Editor,

It is a sad irony when ordinary consumers' only choices faced by the middle and poor working classes are INFLATION or RECESSION under America's capitalist economic system. Why is this so, when two losing choices are offered to the vast majority of ordinary people, but under the same capitalist system, huge rewards continue unabated to fatten the coffers of the already super-rich and powerful billionaires, corporate executives and investor/shareholder/lobbyist class along with government regulator corruption and fraud fleeces the average taxpayer?

Meanwhile, laws are passed that lower taxes on ever greater capital gains, not to mention, as the expanding, secret, off-shore bank accounts and tax evasion schemes keep growing, which creates even greater wealth disparity and economic inequality. Then, add injury to injury when the rank-and-file, canon fodder GI's are paid to fight in wars for fossil fuels and other extractive industries, which brings death and destruction to large numbers of war fighters, as well as, millions of innocent civilians.

Meanwhile, the war machine rewards a relatively small number of capitalist profiteers and weapons makers at the expense of a growing underclass majority made to go along to get along as their quality of life declines, living standards deteriorate, the environment is poisoned, people die by breathing cancer causing carbonized, heat-trapping air, or by contaminated drinking water and as extinctions continue unabated, as growing numbers of species are dying from effects of the warming climate.

What kind of system rewards a tiny ruling elite - war profiteers and environmental destroyers by Wall Street bankers and bloated billionaire parasite investors, protected by laws they help make by a corrupted Congress and which augments their own ill-gotten, planet-destroying, wealth-extracting private "free" enterprise system - at the expense of the vast majority?

Lance Jobson

Towns County Herald

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Flying Feathers

On the ground outside the chicken house, there were feathers everywhere, and not a chicken in sight. My first instinct was to pull the rifle down from the rack and look for predators, but then I heard the voice of Rachael Ray call to me from inside the chicken house.

Rachael was one of the first chicks to receive a name and thereby insure her immunity from the roasting pan (except perhaps on those days when she forgets herself on the path Tracey takes to the garden shed). She is usually quite talkative, but her voice today was timid and disconsolate.

I opened the chicken house door and a carpet of feathers lay underneath our sad little herd of egg layers and bug eaters, still on the roost at midday. They looked miserable, half plucked and raggedy, shoulders hunched and heads down. Even the magnificent plume of tail feathers proudly worn by our rooster, Mr. Tibbs, was down to one sadly comical straggler. The chilly nights and the lengthening shadows of fall had signaled to our gang that it was time to molt.

Since childhood I've heard the expression, "mad as a wet hen," but I think "sad as a molting" one is just as suitable. It's a miserable time for chickens. They stop eating, cease exploring, quit laying, and enter a state of almost-hibernation until they have pushed out the old feathers and replaced them with a fresh mantle of new plumage to keep them warm during the winter. There is nothing to be done about it. It takes as long as it takes. It cannot be avoided and once it starts, it can't be hurried.

Not everyone accepts their fate stoically. Some of the girls, more nervous and impatient, will pick at themselves nervously and irritate their skin, which accomplishes nothing but a longer wait for regrowth. They can become quite cross with each, and while they are too tired to fight, some of the things they say to each other cannot be repeated in polite company.

It occurs to me that we humans must endure our own version of molting. Sometimes things just seem to fall apart. Everything breaks. Nothing works right. We get tired and irritable and we lose the desire to explore our own lives. Devolution always precedes evolution, but when we're on the other side of falling apart, we look back and see how it was all necessary to clear the path for something better.

Some of us have learned to wait it out, or as they say in the military, "embrace the suck." Some of us pick at the discomfort until we're raw. Sadly, we never seem too tired to fight. Nature is wiser than we are.

Nations, even civilizations seem to molt as well, but here in America it's not the changing of the seasons that signals release and regrowth, but the recurrent and seemingly never ending election cycles. Every second and fourth year, the feathers fly. At its best, it mirrors nature. Unfortunately, we are constantly picked at by politics and media until we're so raw that regrowth seems far away, and the bald spots make the winter even colder.

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

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor
P.O. Box 365, Hiawasse, 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.

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.

The Towns County Herald is an independent and non-partisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articles covering local events, etc.

A Time to Plant

Fall brings a change in the weather and the growing season slows down. A lot of people will put their gardens up for the winter, but there are still some tasks that are better done when temperatures are down. Lower temperatures means less water loss from plants. This makes it an ideal time to start putting perennials in the ground.

Trees that have been grown in a pot or are balled and burlapped that have a well-developed root system can be planted at any time of year. However, the ideal time of year to plant them is in the fall. This is because

the top portion of the plant has gone dormant and temperatures are lower, which means the tree will lose less water to evapotranspiration. During this time the roots below ground are still active. That means they will still be growing through fall and the winter. This gives you a more established plant come summer time. It also means that planting in the fall results in you spending less time watering your new plants.

Some of the most common issues when planting new trees is planting too deep, planting too shallow, and over or under watering.

If you are planting in a poorly drained soil creating a raised bed will help improve drainage. Raise the soil level 8-12 inches using native soil. Plantings at new construction sites may need an addition of organic matter to improve soil health. You will also need to till deeply around the planting site to alleviate soil compaction.

The hole that is dug should be 2-3x wider than the size of the root ball. If you are planting into a well-drained soil the depth of the hole should be the same as the height of the root ball. In a poorly drained soil the depth of the hole should be 2-4 inches less than the height of the root ball, then build up the surrounding soil to be level with the root ball. Planting a tree too deep leads to poor drainage and not enough oxygen getting to the roots. Planting a tree too shallow leads to the tree roots drying out too quickly.

Once you have placed the tree in the hole refill the hole. You want to mostly use native soil. Break up any clods and remove stones. You can add compost to the hole, but don't put more than 20% compost in the hole. Tamp the soil down with your foot and construct a 3-inch-high ring around the edge of the root ball to hold water. Apply 2-4 inches of mulch over the planted area. Do not put mulch up against the trunk of the tree, as this leads to rot. For the first few months after planting you want to maintain constant soil moisture in the root ball. The soil does not need to be saturated, but there should be water available to the roots.

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

Habitat for Humanity

The meaning of home. Home is our safe haven, the place we can run to when we want to escape the outside burdens. We often forget the luxury of having a place to call home, and how important it is to our well-being.

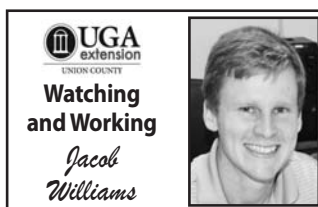
Child homelessness increases the risk of mental, emotional, and developmental issues. Lack of sleep, hunger, constant changes in home and school districts, and living in a home where the parents are in a constant state of survival have detrimental effects on children. Children whose parents suffer from mental illness and/or substance abuse issues are the most vulnerable to repeating the cycle of chronic homelessness.

According to Familygateway.org, the median statistical data for homeless children is unnerving. 1 in 30 American children are homeless, and 51% of these children are under the age of 5. The typical homeless family consists of a single mother with children. The rise in housing costs, lack of affordable housing, illness, child-care and living expenses make single mothers more susceptible to homelessness. Of this survey, 90% of single mothers have experienced physical or sexual abuse in their lifetimes.

Since the rise of the pandemic, the increase in mental health issues and substance abuse has risen drastically. The most powerful barrier of recovery for these individuals is stable, affordable housing. Trends in affordable housing waitlists tend to give ideas of homeless populations in areas. The majority of affordable subsidized housing in the country have a waitlist double of pre-covid times.

Supportive housing is a type of affordable housing that provides onsite help for those struggling with homelessness stemmed from mental illness, disabilities, and substance abuse. Research has demonstrated that supportive housing reduces chronic homelessness. According to supportivehousingcommunities.org, 97% of tenants avoided medical emergencies for fiscal year 2022. 96% remained in stable housing, and 93% of tenants with substance abuse histories did not relapse in supportive community housing.

Supportive housing is a concept that would help break the vicious generational cycles. Making yourself aware of detrimental patterns in society that cause chronic homelessness could change the future of how we can develop solutions to human suffering. Affordable housing investments that provide needed services is an investment in the future of our society, our children, and the health of our country.



Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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