

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

As Good as it gets!

Our USMC will celebrate its 242nd birthday this coming 10 November 2017. We all owe a huge debt of gratitude, honor and humble thanks to all that served in our Marine Corps and especially for those who gave all. On that day beginning at 5:30 PM at Daniel's Steakhouse there will be a birthday party for our Marines. Open to the public the fee is only \$15.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



These men and women are very special and have served throughout our nation's history beginning 242 years ago as the "tip of the spear" in many historic actions globally. To meet most any USMC Veteran, other than a cap or logo they may wear, they are genuine, warm, friendly, often humorous wonderful folks that you'd love to have for your neighbor. Just do not mess with their flag! Which is our flag.

As a former Coast Guardsman there were plenty of times when we and the Marines were stationed with and around got a little "scrappy" with one another. Friendly harassment if you will. We old time Veterans still do that today. A lot of stuff there that many don't or won't understand, but beautiful nevertheless. However working together, as a team, whatever we were doing there was no better group to be on than that team. That bond, sincere brotherhood came through when there was a job to be done. Even in joint training there existed a rock solid sincere appreciation for each other, down to a man. I believe without reservation this can be said of all five of our armed services when a coalition exists.

But let us never forget the very special, unique and relatively small but gigantically important United States Marine Corps! Semper Fidelis forever more Marines!

The very next day, Saturday 11 November 2017 at 11 AM, will be our annual Veterans Day event to be held at our beautiful Towns County Veterans Memorial Park. We will do our best to keep it "short and sweet". In charge will be our American Legion Post # 23 Commander John Harkins. Make no mistake, all our VSOs under the roof of VFW Post 7807 always contribute to this most honorable event, celebrated nationwide. Our guest speaker will be US Army Major Bob Bischoff, Retired. A highly decorated US Army Ranger no less and Vietnam Veteran. Like most of the Marines, mentioned above Bob is a very humble humorous down to earth guy. He and his sweet wife Sara own and run "Pillow Presents", Hwy 17 Young Harris, a specialty shop dedicated to hand made pillows for just about any occasion.

We will also dedicate the twelve names of Towns County Veterans who passed away and now have their names inscribed upon our Memorial Wall. We will do our best to honor their loved ones as our very special guests that day.

Please plan on attending and meet some of the finest citizens and visitors to our unique Towns County community.

Semper Paratus

A Picture is worth a Thousand Rounds

Some of my favorite memories are October memories. I remember Charlie Brown and the Great Pumpkin (which we still watch every year), dressing up like Batman to beg the neighbors for candy and jumping into big piles of leaves. Caramel apples, kettle corn and hot chocolate on frosty mornings take me back to the kind of childhood that seems to have disappeared from large parts of America.

October also marked the beginning of hunting season. I remember the first "real" hunting trip with my dad. The stiff canvas backing of my brand new hunting jacket was a little uncomfortable to wear in the truck as we crossed the mountain, but there was no way I was going to take it off. The single shot Harrington and Richardson 20 gauge shotgun from the last Christmas was a powerful and mysterious object to be treated with the utmost caution bordering on reverence.

We always laughed at Barney Fife's antics with his one-bullet pistol, but there was no joking around when it came to firearms in our house. I still remember the very first lessons, which began with the first BB gun when I was about 8 and continued with the first shotgun when I was 13. Always treat a gun like it's loaded. When you are carrying a gun around people, pretend like the barrel is 20 feet long, and that will make sure that the end of that barrel never crosses anyone's path.

Like many boys who grew up in the country, by the time I enlisted in the Marines, carrying a rifle was second nature. Rifle training came easy, and I scored high enough on the rifle range to be series high shooter. I will be forever grateful that I never had to use those skills in battle.

Times have changed. The reverence for firearms we had as kids is hard to find now, and after 16 years of continuous warfare, there are too many young men who have seen battle.

I haven't hunted in years, but not because I think it's wrong. I'm more interested now in how the animals live than in how they taste, but it amuses me when people condemn hunting but have no qualms about buying a steak at the market.

I believe that everyone who eats meat should have to, at least once, obtain it from scratch. If that were so, I think there would be a lot more vegetarians, and the world wouldn't be so busy exchanging rainforest for fast food hamburgers.

We have argued about gun control in this country for years, and that argument escalates every time there is a tragedy involving firearms. Like so many of our arguments, we only seem to hear from the loudest voices with the most extreme opinions: Those who want to eliminate guns completely versus those who want to arm passengers on airplanes.

Here on the middle path between those extremes, there are many of us who believe in the importance of the Second Amendment, but we're not averse to some mechanism for preventing crazy people, people who are over-medicated, and stupid people, from owning firearms. We want to protect our homes and families from criminal elements. We also want to protect them from the coercive tyranny of too much government, but we realize that an assault rifle is a ridiculous means of doing that. Protection from government comes from education and active participation in our civil society.

Gun violence in America is a problem, but it is a failure, not of our laws, but of our culture. In some of our inner cities it is an economic indicator and a sign of desperation. Gun violence is difficult to discuss in a culture that is overly dependent on images, when so many of the images of our daily lives are violent.

There is not enough room in this newspaper column to show you those images, but you've seen them all your life, and if you've read this far, you're probably one of the shrinking minority who can still form clear images from words.

So here is our verbal slide show for the week. The theme is a culture saturated by violent images that are sold as entertainment.

We'll start with Rambo. You've seen the image a thousand times: Bare chested, teeth clenched in righteous indignation and firing a 50 caliber machine gun, one armed. We glorify the wounded warrior taking down the evil bad guys. Click next. A scantily clad heroine holds a machine pistol in each hand. Hollywood has made gun violence sexy.

Next image. A hip hop star holds a Mac-9. He is decorated with gold and diamonds. Gun violence is hip. Next image. The steely eyed detective points a pistol at the perps. Oh, you just saw that? Where? On Netflix? A pop-up ad on the computer?

Movie trailers, teasers and commercials are full of images of people shooting or about to shoot each other. Search "action-adventure" and count the weapons. Turn on the television morning, noon and night for the latest shooting.

Corporate media (we sometimes say "Hollywood" as a short-cut for the entertainment industry), either in giving us what we want, or enticing us by manipulating our baser instincts, has saturated our culture with violence.

How ironic that many of the same actors and actresses holding the weapons on screen are so quick to condemn. How ironic that many of the same politicians seeking to disarm Americans have no problem selling arms to other countries.

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. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.*
Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Frost Protection

I'm sure many of us spent the past weekend bundled up inside by the fire with some hot cocoa enjoying the first crisp air of fall and winter. We aren't the only ones who may need some protection from cold temperatures though. Our plants may spend their lives outside and be somewhat used to adverse weather, but younger, less hardy plants really need our help when it comes to avoiding damage from hard frosts and cold snaps.

Clear, cloudless nights are the worst for frost damage to plants. During cloudy nights and days, the cloud cover helps to keep in heat that the earth has absorbed. Clear nights, however, allow all the heat that has been absorbed throughout the day to rapidly escape, causing the temperature to drop dramatically and moisture left in the air to settle on plants and freeze. The freezing of these crystals damages plant tissues and causes cracks in stems and bark as well as dieback of tender young shoots, leaves, and buds.

Plants that are most susceptible to frost damage are those that are not native to our area, are actively growing, or are not yet cold hardened. Frost damage is a major concern in spring as warm temperatures early in the season cause plants to break their dormant state early, and buds are nipped during the last season frost. However, dramatic drops in temperature throughout the winter can cause significant damage to plants as well. In mature plants, this could mean dieback of branches or the death of buds, causing less new growth or flowering the following year. Young plants with no protection are often killed by prolonged below freezing temperatures.

The best way to protect your plants against frost damage is to prevent it by planning ahead and providing appropriate care as best as you can. When possible, always select cold-tolerant plants and plan your landscaping appropriately. Brick walls, rocks, and patios are excellent heat sources as they absorb sunlight throughout the day. These can serve as heat sources for sensitive plants. Always try to plant in areas with southern and western exposure as these get the most sunlight throughout the day and are the warmest areas at night. If a plant requires full to part sun, always plant in full sun if possible. Plant early-blooming frost tolerant plants in the coldest part of your property to make sure they do not break dormancy and risk losing their beautiful flowers. Plants still need hydration over the winter, so make sure they are adequately watered. Moist soil also changes temperature slowly, so this can help reduce cold damage to the roots. Use plenty of ground cover such as mulch to protect root systems as well.

Preserving heat is another way to protect plants. Draping a large blanket or cloth over young or sensitive plants can protect them from frost crystals forming and hold in heat absorbed by the soil. Leave the cloth loose and let it hang all the way down to the ground. Do not tie the cloth to the trunk of the tree or shrub, as this cuts the foliage off from the heat being released by the ground. Remove the cloth in the morning to prevent too much heat from building up, causing the plant to exit dormancy.

Though sensitive greenery does need to be protected during severe temperatures, it is important not to overprotect on milder nights. Exposure to some cold temperatures can actually aid in cold-hardening plants. For more information on how to protect your plants against frost or what varieties may be susceptible, contact your extension office.

UGA extension
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



Letters to The Editor

Graffiti on Bell Mountain

Dear Editor,
 For the past 50 or so years, people have gone up to Bell Mountain and painted graffiti on the exposed rocks. That may have been okay with the small number of visitors then, but now every single rock is painted with graffiti and it is allowed by Towns County. Since all rocks have been painted, people now paint on the pavement and on the wood platforms. I was told that a mother recently parked at the top, gave each of her three children a can of spray paint, and told them to go paint. What are we teaching our young people? It is okay to write graffiti some places but not other places? I think Towns County government needs to address this problem. How?

1. Make writing on any surface at Bell Mtn Park illegal. Post signs that include a stiff fine for doing so.
2. Install more security cameras and follow up with penalties for those who do not follow the new rule.
3. Have all of the present graffiti removed from the rocks (sandblast?). This may be expensive but it is necessary if we are to preserve this great resource.

Doing all this will not change behavior overnight, but we have to make a start. Come on Towns County. Do the right thing, not the easy thing!

Jerry Carnes

Climate Change - the Deadly Experiment

Dear Editor,
 We are now engaging in the most dangerous experiment in history. It is a human experiment to see how much greenhouse gases we can put out into our environment and how much we can raise the earth's temperature before we do irreparable, catastrophic damage to our earth. It is an experiment to see if the 1-3% of climate experts who say that climate change is not real are correct rather than the 97-99% who say that it is real. The most dangerous thing is that our human race - you and I and our children and grandchildren for countless generations to come - is being used as the guinea pigs. Do we want this experiment to continue as the evidence mounts that rising seas, and increasing storm, fire, and drought are indeed damaging our earth?

The good news is that we now have the means to stop climate change while actually growing the economy. Three prominent Republicans who were former Secretaries of the State or Secretaries of the Treasury under the Nixon, Reagan, and Bush administrations-George Shultz, James Baker, and Henry Paulson- along with Rob Walton and other prominent Republicans have come out with what they call the Conservative Case for Carbon Dividends plan. They call for placing a price on the production of greenhouse gases and refunding all the money to all US citizens. They claim this will combat climate change while growing our economy. It is time for Republicans and Democrats to come together in a common sense, market driven plan to combat climate change. This plan appears to do just that. It is time to stop our deadly experiment!

Vernon Dixon, MD

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Let the Herald work for you!

Contact us at 706-896-4454

Deadline for the T.C. Herald is

Friday by 5 PM



Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday:	
	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday	
	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	Every Thursday:	
Free GED prep.	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Friday:	
	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday:	
	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Mtn. Amat. Radio	First Monday of each month:	
	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
Alzheimer's Supp.	First Tuesday of each month:	
American Legion	McConnell Church	1:30 pm
Hiaw. City Council	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Young Harris Coun.	City Hall	6 pm
	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	First Wednesday of each month:	
	McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	First Thursday of each month:	
	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Red Cross DAT	Fourth Monday of each month:	
	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Lions Club	Fourth Tuesday of each month:	
	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Republican Party	Fourth Thursday of each month:	
	New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Last Thursday of each month:	
	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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