

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

July 9, 1944 Letter from a Local Hero

To: Mr. Charles Phillips Jr.; Hiawassee, Georgia From: Pvt. Sherlock H. Sanders; 34831663 APO 15328; CO Postmaster; New York, NY

The Veterans' Corner Scott Drummond USCG Veteran



"Dear Charles, I should have written you sooner but as you know a soldier stays pretty busy.

How are you making it now Charles? I imagine you're killing a few weeds now it being the weed killing season!

It might be that you are fishing a bit now if the lake is in condition. Frasier tells some big fish tales. I don't know whether to believe it or not! He might just be trying to make me homesick - that wouldn't be hard to do because I'm just about in that stage now. You might think that unnecessary but being 3 or 4 thousand miles from home gives you a queer feeling, especially if you aren't getting any mail.

If I don't get some soon I'll quit writing. I have already ran out of anything to say. Of course if I could be with you I would snow you under so to speak!

Charles, England is some different to what I thought it would be but I have made the necessary adjustments and have learned to like it fine - what else could I do? It is very beautiful but 2 or 3 years here will seem like a lifetime to me.

Take it easy Charles and write to me if you can find time. I'd like to hear all the news if there is any!

Your Friend, Sherlock

P.S. I'd like to have a picture of you if you don't mind." Thanks to a member of Towns County Historical Society for saving this all these years thus initiating our meeting of 11/16/2017, to present this letter to Cecil Sanders Jr. Thanks to Cecil, Sherlock's brother and USMC Chosen Reservoir survivor, for sharing this with us.

For those who may not know the Sanders family, of this wonderful mountain community, he, his father and brothers have served honorably in our military services for decades.

As you read the transcript of this first person history above, please bear in mind that young Sherlock was offered a leadership training job with the Army and did not have to go to Europe to fight the NAZI threat. He turned that job down in order to be with the men he trained with, thus doing the hard job. He is one of hundreds of thousands of reasons our unique Sovereign Republic and our freedoms exist today. This must never be forgotten! Those who serve understand the fact that something far greater than themselves must be defended from the evil that manifests itself throughout the world and mankind's history.

Shortly after Sherlock wrote this letter home on August 13, 1944 he and his squad were on patrol in a ravine, Saint Lo, France and became surrounded by a NAZI two sided machine gun ambush.

Sherlock and all of his fellow soldiers were killed. If you are reading this, they died for you.

Semper Paratus

Letters to The Editor

A Firm Believer in Climate Change

Dear Editor,

One wonders whether Vernon Dixon holds a controlling interest in the Towns County Herald. It seems that week after week we are held hostage by his cult-like treatise on global warming or climate change. If there's any doubt remaining in your mind that climate change is a plague on humanity he will take care of that for you. Is he trying to make Towns County the epicenter for all things environmentally-alarmist? He is taking this whole global warming thing and using it as a bludgeon to beat people, corporations and even nations into doing what some few want. It is funny, if you remember years ago when the big scare was global cooling and then when that didn't fly it went to global warming. I agree with one of the previous writers who stated that we should only include letters to the editor that concern local issues that affect Towns County residents. By the way, I am a firm believer in climate change - it does so every hour.

Tim Groza

Shopping securely for the holidays

This week we celebrate Thanksgiving. Many are already planning their Christmas shopping. While stores and consumers alike are getting ready for a busy season of shopping, criminals are planning to take advantage of unwary consumers.

Each year criminals and unscrupulous companies, many of them outside the United States, take advantage of consumers through the use of internet fraud.

We offer for your consideration the following guidelines suggested by the FBI to help you avoid becoming a victim: Only purchase merchandise from reputable dealers or establishments. Try to obtain a physical address rather than merely a post office box and a phone number; call the seller to see if the number is correct and working. Send them an e-mail to see if they have an active e-mail address and be wary of those that utilize free e-mail services where a credit card wasn't required to open the account. Consider not purchasing from sellers who won't provide you with this type of information. Purchase merchandise directly from the individual/company that holds the trademark, copyright, or patent. Beware when responding to e-mail that may not have been sent by a reputable company. Guard your account information carefully. Don't give out your credit card number(s) online unless the site is a secure and reputable site. Sometimes a tiny icon of a padlock appears to symbolize a higher level of security to transmit data. This icon is not a guarantee of a secure site, but might provide you some assurance.

We at the Towns County Sheriff's Office are thankful for the opportunity to serve our citizens. As we all pause to give thanks this year, consider helping a child less fortunate by becoming a partner in the Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund. This annual project provides Christmas toys for Towns County children who otherwise would not receive gifts due to financial hardships. Each year we hold the Sheriff's Christmas Parade to benefit the Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund. Participants are asked to bring a new unwrapped toy for a boy or girl. If you would like to help a child in need by donating toys or make a financial contribution, you may do so at either the Towns County Sheriff's Office Detention Center and Administrative Offices, located at 4070 State Hwy 339, Young Harris, GA or at the Towns County Sheriff's Office located in the Towns County Courthouse, at 48 River Street, Suite F, Hiawassee, GA. If you know of a child or children that are in need of assistance or for further information contact our offices at 706-896-4444 or 706-896-8343.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership and for allowing us to serve this great community.

From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

Refilling Empty Chairs

The weather finally feels right for the time of year, but it's a little confusing. August felt like September, and then in October we had more of the June weather that should have come in July. It's November now, but just a few days ago the frogs were croaking in our frog pond and the grass is as green as it was in May.

I saw the first Halloween decorations in the stores in August, and Christmas decorations showed up two weeks before Halloween. The calendar says Thanksgiving is this week, but the year cannot possibly be this old. Was it really over a year ago that we were recovering from historic wildfires in the mountains?

That feeling of time slipping by unnoticed is becoming more common. It's a side effect of our hyper-connected culture and technology which affects our brains like drugs and alcohol, though the "blackout" is not as intense or debilitating.

Let's take Facebook, for example. For all its positive benefits in enabling people to stay in touch, a significant amount of study has gone into getting us to spend as much time as possible using the platform and contributing content.

Here's how that works: We post a picture or a comment and we look to see how many comments and "likes" we get. For every little red number we see, we get a small hit of dopamine. In the brain, exactly the same reward pathway is stimulated when we eat chocolate or use cocaine, and it's also addictive.

A case can be made that any activity can be addictive. We release neuropeptides and create new neural pathways when we take drugs, but we also do that every time we learn something, or experience an emotion. Addiction happens when we create neural pathways which cause us pain when they are not regularly maintained.

How many people can go to sleep now without checking that smart phone one more time? I dare you. See if you can do it without feeling at least a little bit unsettled, or making an excuse to look for that important message - at 11 o'clock at night.

The vast majority of human history was spent in close contact with the natural world and its rhythms. Time moved more slowly. Its passage was measured by the movement of celestial bodies, the sun, the moon and the stars.

We lived our lives in sync with those natural rhythms. They told us when to plant and when to harvest. Holidays were so much more than ritualized shopping extravaganzas. The Winter Solstice was vitally important because it marked the return of the sun after its long retreat, and the other major observances of the year, the Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice and Autumnal Equinox, reflected the movement of the earth itself on its long journey around the Sun.

As science and technology replaced myth and magic, we became detached from the origins of our natural observances. We invented new holidays to mark the year. They were just as important to us, for they reflected our values, our beliefs and our history.

The holidays no longer circumscribe the year. Now the passage of time is measured by the next opportunity to binge-watch our favorite television series. One holiday runs into the next. Every day is Black Friday, but there is no darkness at night, no rest, and no escape from the hive mind. We're afraid of the dark, and we can't see the stars anymore.

The large part of humanity which is technologically savvy today is entering the undiscovered country. We have disconnected, some of us permanently, from the natural rhythms of the earth. We have been drawn into an addictive, hyper-connected union which provides continuous stimulation and distraction, and it happened so quickly that we have no idea of the long term implications for our species. We are losing our sense of the passage of time, of historical context, of our national identity and even our sense of self.

We have a wonderful opportunity to reverse that trend every Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is about grati-

tude, and nothing is more effective than gratitude for centering us in the here-and-now. This holiday celebrates and renews the bonds of family and friendship. It is a quintessentially American holiday, and it comes without the religious and political baggage which has graffitied some of our other, more commercialized observances.

We invite you to disconnect from the Matrix this Thanksgiving. Savor every moment, every bite of stuffing, every conversation, and every nap. Look around the table and cherish the faces you see there. Remember the empty chairs, and speak the names of the departed to keep their memories alive. Know that there will be more empty chairs as the years go by, and no amount of "likes" will ever fill them.

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.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Firewood Pests

With the frost on my car this morning, the main thing on my mind is getting home and starting a nice warm fire. However, whether you get your firewood from a local source, or your own backyard, it could be a host to any number of invasive insects. For this reason, Georgia and many other states regulate the transport of firewood to prevent the spread of these pests. Before you go on that winter camping trip or bring your firewood to another location, make sure you are aware of the regulations and potential risks this can pose.

UGA extension From the Ground Up Melissa Mattee



It is always best to use locally harvested firewood. After the storm damage from Irma, I don't think any of us will have any trouble finding wood from downed trees in our county. Though the term "local" seems a little vague, a good rule of thumb is to keep firewood within a 50 mile radius of its origin, or within county lines when possible. Currently, Georgia has several quarantine zones for pests, as do other states. It is illegal to move firewood into or out of these zones, so think twice before loading up your camper with wood even if you don't see holes or sawdust on it.

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is one of the insects that we are trying to prevent from being spread throughout the state. This small, iridescent green beetle may look beautiful, but it can devastate our hardwood forests. Most of our native wood-feeding beetles only attack trees weakened by drought or injury. However, these beetles are threatening because they infest actively growing, healthy trees. As the beetles burrow through the trunks, they leave "D" shaped holes, something that is characteristic of only this species. There is currently a widespread detection program to keep track of EAB infestations, and in 2016, Union and Rabun Counties were added to the list of infested counties. However, in 2017, there were no new counties added, meaning the spread of the insect had slowed.

There are also monitoring programs in place for insects that may pose a threat to our forests but have not yet been detected in Georgia. The siren woodwasp is an invasive wasp that lays its eggs in the trunks of pine trees. Along with the egg, it also injects a fungus, which the larva eats. However, this fungus infects the tree and prevents nutrients and water from flowing adequately through the tissue. This eventually leads to the death of the tree. The gypsy moth is a widespread problem in the Northeastern United States. These insects were originally imported to be farmed for silk, but they quickly infested large stands of trees. Unlike our webworms and tent caterpillars, the extent of defoliation caused by gypsy moth caterpillars can often kill whole stands of trees. While the EAB and siren woodwasp which are transported in the larval stage, gypsy moths lay their eggs on the bark of trees. These eggs are then moved with the firewood when the tree is cut down and relocated, infesting a new area.

We have excellent monitoring systems in place to ensure that we can detect the spread of new pests. However, campers and travelers will still move their firewood with them across state and county lines, bringing insects and diseases with their load that will infect healthy areas. By using local wood, or heat treated wood, we can decrease the risk of new infestations and infections establishing in our pristine forests.



Towns County Community Calendar

Table with community events: Every Monday, Every Tuesday, Every Wednesday, Every Thursday, Every Friday, Every Sunday, Second Thursday of each month, Third Monday of each month, Third Tuesday of each month, Third Wednesday of each month, Third Thursday of each month, Third Saturday of each month, Fourth Monday of each month, Fourth Tuesday of each month.

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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