

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Veterans Day 2020

Let's all pray for good weather on November 11, 2020 11 AM for at least an hour.

Whereas we annually recognize ALL Veterans on that very special American day, Veterans Memorial Park.

Typically our American Legion Post #23 Commander Randal Forehand takes a lead in assembling the entourage of Veterans who make this event a success every year.

Our American Legion Riders will bring in colors at approximately 10:50 AM.

Sharp start at 11 AM. We will have an invocation. A short prayer for our nation and community.

Our keynote speaker, First Sergeant US Army RET Marion Crawford, this year will be introduced by Mel Halfon, our past VFW Post# 7807 Commander.

Everybody in the County knows Mel and it would be wonderful if we all got to know Marion, a decorated Vietnam Veteran with some great stories about her and "her girls" who valiantly served our nation in Vietnam and was instrumental in the development of the WAC.

She is nothing less than world class.

Brandy Creel, USAF Ret, will be assisting in announcing the ten new names of Towns County Veterans who have been called to their Eternal Home, and are newly inscribed upon our granite wall here in our Veterans Memorial Park.

A consortium of ALL of our VSOs, attached to VFW Post #7807 have contributed time and effort to make this Veterans Day just as important as all our past Veterans Day events.

This includes VFW Post #7807 (Commander John Harkins); American Legion Post#23 (Commander Randal Forehand); American Legion Riders (Director Lloyd MacBride); Sons of American Legion (Commander Paul Yellina); American Legion Auxiliary (President Robin Halfon); VFW Auxiliary (President John Whalen); Marine Corps League (Commandant Charlie Sowers).

If you are new to Towns County, you very well may qualify to join one of these VSOs. Go by the post on Sunnyside Drive and check it out.

The laying of the wreaths by a representative of each of these groups is a moving event.

And as always our superlative Towns County High School will present musical interludes including our National Anthem.

Guaranteed to get your heart going!

Let's don't leave out thanks to our Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw, without his willing assistance much of what we do wouldn't be possible.

Several other special guests will be in attendance.

As our official ceremony concludes with a rendering of TAPS, there will be many of us who as every time this is heard, tears stream down our faces.

This is heartfelt by so many.

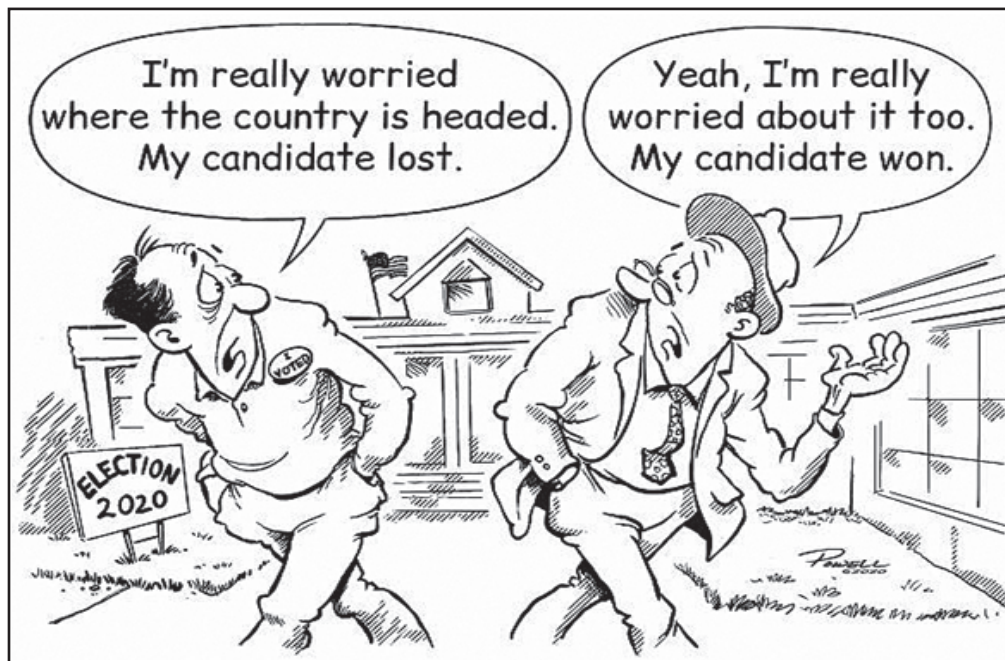
Our closing prayer will be conducted by Katie Harkins our American Legion District #9 Chaplain.

Shifting gears just a wee bit, we desperately need volunteers to take a couple of hours each week to work in our VFW Thrift Store, very conveniently located smack dab in the middle of Hiwassee.

Go by and buy something donated to our Thrift store, something gently used but not abused.

Volunteer your time for a fun job which benefits our community and our post.

Prices for something you need simply CANNOT be beat! - *Semper Paratus*



## The Government We Deserve

We have memory issues.

This can be a blessing and a curse. It's a blessing when it's time to change or to move on from hard times to better days. It's a curse when we forget the lessons history has to teach and then repeat them, or when politics tries to rewrite history to further an agenda.

In the age of disinformation we are cursed with a cultural memory that is short and selective. Four years ago, after one of the most divisive elections in modern history, we were forced to forget our differences, at least for a while. East and west of our enchanted valleys and hillsides, scores of firefighters were struggling to contain two major wildfires, and we were trapped in between. Smoke filled the air and ashes fell from the sky. It was hard to breathe, and you could taste the fear.

We rose to the occasion. We volunteered and we donated. We supported our local heroes and made welcome those who came here from across the country to help us. All of a sudden, and for a good long time afterward, politics and pixels just weren't that important anymore. Family was important, and church and community. It took a common enemy to show us who we had become and remind us who we can be.

How soon we forget. Four years later we're even more deranged by politics and pixels, angry, frightened, frustrated. The voices of our better angels are lost in the din, but we do have a common enemy. It's an enemy that's more subtle than a wildfire. It's hard to pin down, because it hides in plain sight and it often looks just like us. Some might describe it as a perversion of our technology and institutions that functions as a lens which magnifies our baser instincts. It's an unholy alliance of politicians and corporations with an insatiable appetite for power and profit. It's a corrupt system that repeatedly serves up an illusion of choice between corruption and turpitude. It frightens and browbeats us into choosing between evil and lesser evil as if the survival of humanity itself hinged on every vote.

We are ruled, consumed by this golem we created and which we empower. Which. We. Empower. It does not have a life of its own, but as long as we are divided and forgetful of who we can be, it will grip us with fear and the illusion of helplessness. The architects of our system of government foresaw the possibility of our disempowerment and provided a path to a solution. It's called a Convention of States. We've talked about this before and we will again. In order to walk this challenging path, we will have to take a hard look at who we have become and remember who we can be. We need to be better, because no matter what we do, we will always get the government we deserve.

**The Middle Path**  
By: Don Perry  
onthemiddlepath.com

## Soil Testing

Soil testing is a very important part of growing a quality crop, having a good looking garden, having a quality lawn, or a good pasture.

Soil testing gives you an insider look at what is going on in your soil.

Let's take a look at what a soil test can do for you and why it's a good idea to have your soil tested.

If you have a garden at your house it's a good idea to have your soil tested every other year.

A soil test will show you the pH, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, and manganese levels in your soil.

These are essential elements for plant growth. Nitrogen is also a very important nutrient for plant growth. However, nitrogen is very mobile in the soil.

Therefore, you could test your soil and by the time that you receive your soil results back from the lab the amount of nitrogen in the soil could be drastically different.

pH is often the most limiting factors when it comes to growing plants in the mountains.

A soil test will tell you the pH and the recommended lime to bring that pH up to an acceptable level for the plants.

Any lime that is added to soil will take 3-6 months to fully take effect.

That means for spring plantings, now is a good time to take a soil test and begin adding lime.

When taking a sample for your lawn, a depth of 4 inches is appropriate.

If you're taking a sample for gardens, ornamentals, mixed fruit trees, and wildlife plots sample to a depth of 6-8 inches. You can use a spade or a soil probe.

When you take the sample it's best to take multiple samples from around the plot that you are interested in. This way you'll get an average of the area that you're sampling and a better representative sample.

Using a trowel or small shovel, take 8-10 samples and mix them together in a bucket. From that bucket take the sample that you'll bring into the Extension office so that we can send it to the UGA labs.

Make sure that you get enough soil so that the lab can test properly. About 2 cups of soil is needed.

If you're sampling from an area that has mulch or grass on top of it push that material away so that you penetrate down to the soil.

Pull out any rock or roots that you get with the soil sample and throw them away. When you take the sample, spread the wet/damp soil on a newspaper and let the soil air out overnight before bringing it in to the office, so that it dries down some.

When deciding how many samples you need to take, look at the area and determine how many different types of conditions you have.

For example, if you have a low lying spot, a steep slope, and a wooded area, each one of these would need a unique soil sample done.

When you receive the results from the lab they will have recommendations for you based on the types of plants that you have or plan to have.

Bring soil samples into your local county Extension Office.

If you have questions regarding the soil sampling or the results you can call your local Extension office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

**UGA extension**  
**Watching and Working**  
Jacob Williams

**The Veterans' Corner**  
Scott Drummond  
USCG Veteran

## The Good Works of the Society of St. Andrew

America wastes roughly 40 percent of its food. Of the estimated 125 to 160 billion pounds of food that goes to waste every year, much of it is perfectly edible and nutritious. Food is lost or wasted for a variety of reasons: bad weather, processing problems, overproduction and unstable markets cause food loss long before it arrives in a grocery store, while overbuying, poor planning and confusion over labels and safety contribute to food waste at stores and in homes. Food waste also has a staggering price tag, costing this country approximately \$218 billion per year.

Uneaten food also puts unneeded strain on the environment by wasting valuable resources like water and farmland and filling our landfills. At a time when 12 percent of American households are food insecure, reducing food waste by just 15 percent could provide enough sustenance to feed more than 25 million people, annually.

When we hear a producer saying, "It's a shame this has to go to waste," that is when they should call the Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) which is a non-profit organization that uses volunteers to "glean" the fields to harvest or get food that would otherwise go to waste. They know that farmers are in business to make a profit, so they will never ask a farmer to donate first-quality produce or even sell it to them at a discount.

But if they have produce that they will be unable to sell, that will simply be left to rot in fields or in a landfill, then they need to talk to SoSA. They can let SoSA know what will work for them, and that will be the goal. SoSA will make it easy for a farmer to donate surplus and unmarketable food.

SoSA handles all the logistics of getting the fresh, but unmarketable produce to thousands of feeding agencies across the country. SoSA will follow the producer's instructions about agencies they prefer to support or avoid. SoSA will track exactly which agencies receive the produce they donate and where it is distributed. SoSA has 40 years' experience, working with thousands of growers across the 48 contiguous United States. By 2019, they had distributed more than 850 million pounds of healthy fruits and vegetables that were not commercially marketable but were still fresh and safe to be eaten.

SoSA has learned from the best on how to distribute the food safely and efficiently. SoSA tracks the produce donations by weight and type and at year's end, they will provide an itemized receipt of the donations. The producer's "tax letter" will provide the weights and types of produce donated.

The Society of St. Andrew is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, which means the gifts are likely tax deductible. Federal legislation protects the producer from any liability while the

volunteers are on the farm gleaning the fields. Farmers are protected from all liability concerns through the Bill Emerson "Good Samaritan" Food Donation Act, passed by the US Congress in 1996. SoSA, as a nonprofit, ensures that the landowner and the recipients are 100% protected from liability.

SoSA steps in at whatever point produce is declared waste and unmarketable and they work with the producer throughout the donation process. SoSA will handle: Produce still in the field or orchard after the harvesters have finished at end of season? at the U-Pick farm or Agritourism business? They will send and supervise volunteer gleaners to harvest the produce by hand. Produce graded out at the packing house? They can pick up produce by the bin, dump trailer, or tractor-trailer load, and haul it away, for distribution off-site. Produce rejected at warehouse, distribution center, or grocery store? They will work quickly to offload rejected produce and transport it to nearby agencies for distribution. Produce on a truck involved in an accident? Unless it has been harmed by a fuel spill or by chemical fire retardants, they can usually recover and distribute this good food to hungry families.

SoSA charges no fees, to those who donate food or to those who receive it. Their operating expenses are covered by donations from individuals, churches and civic organizations, and grants. The Society of St. Andrew brings people together to harvest and share healthy food, reduce food waste, and build caring communities by offering nourishment to hungry neighbors. Share Our Surplus is a great way to encourage healthier eating in the community, address the issues of food waste and hunger, focus on the abundance of food available to us, and support the work of the Society of St. Andrew.

Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church in Young Harris has taken the lead in Towns and Union counties to get this food rescue and distribution program started and has hired an intern to lead and develop the program. If you have ideas, suggestions, or would like to volunteer to help, contact Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church. Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D will support and promote the work of the Society of St. Andrew anyway we can thru our field days, events, and programs that are for the farmers in our area.

For more information on the gleaning work that The Society of St. Andrew does go to: www.endhunger.org or check ChestChatt RC&D out on Facebook Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D or our website www.chestchattred.org.

**RC&D**  
Frank Riley  
Executive Director

## 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, Hiwassee, 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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