

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Weather

As every one of us Veterans who served operationally know just about anywhere on our globe, the weather can be friend or foe. Doesn't matter if you were in aircraft, seagoing vessels, in the mud or desert the weather can be downright miserable at times, without mankind experimenting and dithering around with God's own Mother Nature!

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



One problem encountered in Vietnam was the logics and supply line known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail whereas the Communist forces were kept supplied with food, and weapons. Our forces repeatedly bombed that roadway with unsatisfactory results. Their forces kept rerouting and rebuilding the trail surrounded by thick forest and woodlands. Thus their supply line kept material flowing to our enemy forces.

Meanwhile here at home experimenting with cloud seeding in California at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake had begun. Testing was done in Okinawa, Guam, Philippines, Texas, and Florida, calling it Project Stormfury. This was to become top secret Project Popeye. As a highly classified mission in Southeast Asia, Project Popeye was decided as an answer to stopping the flow of traffic from north to South Vietnam along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The plan using lead iodide and silver iodide was determined to soften the road surfaces; cause or create landslides along roadways; to wash out river crossings; and to maintain saturated or flooded conditions beyond the normal monsoon season.

Command and control of this project was under the domain of the 54th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, their slogan being, "make mud, not war". Cloud seeding missions were flown beginning on March 20, 1967 until 1972. Three C-130 Hercules aircraft and Two F-4C Phantom jets out of Udorn Thani Royal Thai Air Force Base in Thailand flew these missions twice a day. Also they accomplished their regular duty of weather recon missions. The crews were rotated regularly out of Guam, and their code name for their missions was "Motorpool". On July 11, 1967 this mud and flood campaign was expanded to the 20th parallel including areas of North Vietnam. Then expanded again on April 1, 1968 to include the A Shau Valley area of South Vietnam.

As of July 5, 1972 all rainmaking missions were ceased. There were problems from the beginning of "Popeye" as one of the early clouds drifted over one of our Special Forces camps and dropped nine inches of rain in four hours! Cloud movement cannot be controlled. As well, we now know that the seeding chemicals are often toxic to animals and humans. Early on it was known that the buildup of these chemicals in water resulted in huge fish kills. Our Secretary of State at the time Henry Kissinger along with our CIA lied to Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird who then denied to Congress that weather modification as a tactical weapon never existed.

However, to this day other politically motivated officials continue to speak of weather modification programs which have been proven to be toxic in implementation, as well as detrimental to our own men and women serving in operational areas of warfare.

Semper Paratus

Not So Great

Last week we remembered the 77th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, which triggered The United States' entry into WWII. Every December 7th we acknowledge the sacrifices made by that great generation, and rightly so.

Not too many years ago, that first paragraph could have been shorter. There was no need explain the significance of Pearl Harbor. Over 16 million men and women served in the armed forces during WWII. Since then, three generations have grown up with a parent or grandparent who remembered. Today, less than half a million of those veterans are still alive. We are rapidly losing the living memory of that devastating conflict.

There are few who remember Admiral J. O. (Joe) Richardson, the commander of the US Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor until 1940. Admiral Richardson repeatedly warned President Roosevelt about the dangers of a Japanese attack, and the Admiral closely monitored Japanese movements to give the fleet time to vacate the base should the need arise. In 1940 he wrote Roosevelt to strongly recommend the immediate removal of the fleet to San Francisco.

By 1941, the US had been able to decipher encrypted Japanese communications and for months our government knew that the Japanese government had decided that war was their only option for survival. However, when Admiral Richardson pressed Roosevelt on the danger to the fleet, Roosevelt's reply to the Admiral's concerns was, "Joe, you just don't understand that this is an election year and there are certain things that can't be done, no matter what, until the election is over and won."

After the election, Roosevelt fired Admiral Richardson. Nevertheless, as late as 13 days before the Pearl Harbor attack, Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, wrote in his diary, "He [Roosevelt] brought up the event that we were likely to be attacked perhaps (as soon as) next Monday [December 1], for the Japanese are notorious for making an attack without warning, and the question was what we should do. The question was how we should maneuver them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves."

The story of how the United States, in an effort to limit Japanese expansion, effectively cut off Japan's oil supply in the months leading up to WWII, is rarely mentioned in history books. The Japanese knew that they would quickly run out of oil unless they were able to capture new supplies in the Dutch East Indies, but they also knew that the United States would oppose them unless their navy was able to cripple our Pacific fleet.

Then on 25 November, Secretary of State Cordell Hull sent Japan an ultimatum demanding that they withdraw from China. Japan attacked Pearl Harbor 12 days later, killing 2,403 people, sinking or damaging eight battleships, and destroying 188 airplanes.

History books persist in absolving Roosevelt of any knowledge or responsibility for the attack on Pearl Harbor. We continue to groom the image of the United States as an innocent victim of Japan and Roosevelt as a great president, but the truth is much more involved. It is almost Byzantine in its complexity.

There is no doubt that Roosevelt did extraordinary things as president. He rose to the challenge presented by very trying times. But his elevation to "greatness" (and the same is true of any president) is motivated as much by politics as any desire to realistically appraise his time in office.

"Greatness" is cheapened by our habitual use of the word. We take serious note of the "path to greatness" of people who chase balls or read lines for movies. "People worship" has plagued us since before humanity worked its fingers to the bone to build pyramids for their god-kings. Thousands of years later we are still a culture obsessed with celebrity and "great" individuals, and as such we are vulnerable to the most egregious manipulation.

I'm all for respecting the dead, and choosing to emphasize the good that people did when we remember them. But I also believe that when you take on a leadership role you give up the right to that indulgence. In continuing our long tradition of whitewashing the records of dead presidents and other elected leaders we promote a shallow and cursory understanding of history. When we expunge our mistakes from the record, we make it harder to avoid repeating those mistakes.

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.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Mistletoe

Around this time of year mistletoe is sometimes a popular decoration in people's homes. You'll see it hanging above doorways for use by romantically inclined couples. Nowadays you can buy plastic mistletoe at stores to put up in your house. Let's talk about the effect that mistletoe can have on trees in nature.

You can find mistletoe outside on trees year round as it is an evergreen plant. Usually in December it will become more noticeable because trees are bare after dropping their leaves. If you see a green bundle of leaves in the branches of tree around this time of year, chances are that it's mistletoe. In the plant world mistletoe is considered a parasitic mistle. Mistletoe will send its root, called the haustorium, into the bark of a host tree. The mistletoe will take nutrients and water from the host tree.

Mistletoe is usually found in the southern United States, because it is susceptible to freezing temperatures, ranging from Virginia over to Texas and down to Florida. It can infect more than 105 different species of trees. Some trees often infected by mistletoe are maples, buckeyes, birch, hickory, different kinds of oaks, and a whole bunch more.

Mistletoe can be shaded out by surrounding branches. Therefore, fast growing trees that can cover mistletoe from above will have success in preventing infection.

Mistletoe creates a new place on the tree that is a large draw for water and nutrients on the tree. Mistletoe will pull these things to itself away from the roots of the tree. This process can lead to a lot of stress on the tree, especially in a drought. Mistletoe tissue will have 1.6 times more nitrogen, 2.3 times more potassium, and 2.5 times more phosphorus than the host tree tissue. During times of drought mistletoe water and nutrient uptake from the tree will increase while the rest of the tree is in decline. Research has shown that moderately infected trees can have a 66% mortality rate after a severe drought period. Mistletoe is able to pull water from the tree more effectively than the tree can pull the water up.

Mistletoe infections can be very common. Trees that are taller than surrounding trees and trees that are not densely packed in with other trees are most likely to be infected. Infections will be begin at the top of the tree and move downward and inward over time. Advanced symptoms on the tree of infection can be branch die-back, reduced tree growth, increased stress, and in massive infestations, tree death.

Early intervention is critical when dealing with mistletoe infection. If you simply remove the mistletoe shoot it will mostly likely grow back, so repeated removal would be necessary. Pruning tree branches that are infected is an effective method of removing mistletoe. Remove the branch at least 14 inches below the point of infection. Ethepon is as chemical application that is a plant growth regulator that can be used to control mistletoe. Whenever you apply any chemical, read the label before application.

Control of mistletoe on old and socially significant trees can be important. Having a mistletoe infection does not necessarily mean that death is imminent for a tree, but mistletoe can have a drastic impact on the tree's ability to thrive. If you have any questions about mistletoe contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Letters to The Editor

Learning About the State of Georgia

Dear Editor,
 My name is Selah and I am a student at Cascade Christian Schools in Puyallup, WA. Each year at my school, students in the 5th grade are assigned different states in the USA and I have been assigned Georgia. We are responsible for gathering as much information as we can about our state.

If any of your readers would like to help me by sending any pictures, postcards, used license plates, facts, products, etc., from your state, it would be greatly appreciated! Please mail anything you are willing to donate to: Cascade Christian School, Attn: Selah, 601 9th Ave. SE, Puyallup, WA 98372. For more information call 253-841-2091.
Thank you very much,
 Selah

Manufacturing Consent

Dear Editor,
 Part of the danger we are facing today, is when "patriotic" militarists work day-in and day-out, through the press and media to manufacture consent in the public. By way of a constant din of pro-war propaganda and the celebration of all things military, emanating from news outlets, whether from the New York Times, right down to local weeklies like the Towns County Herald.

The call for armies to clash in the name of democracy and freedom, is an age old lie that says fighting to the death is the best solution to solving disputes. When in fact, peace sought by war is the height of criminality, depravity and immorality.

True patriotism is when people stand-up and say no more wars for Empire. The true patriot takes the fight against the warmongers in power and not just fall blindly behind the demagogues and mountebanks who command us into endless and escalating wars of aggression.
Lance G. Jobson

Have something to sell?
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Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM • 706-896-4454



Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	Every Thursday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Every Friday: Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Conv./Vis. Bureau	Second Tuesday of each month: Civic Center	8 am
Gem & Mineral Club	Senior Center	1:30 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Church	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
Basket Weavers	Second Wednesday of each month: SC Fire Hall	10 am
Hiaw Writers	Second Thursday of each month: Hiaw Pk. Comm. Rm.	10:30
Awake America Prayer	Civic Center	Noon
Mtn. Comm. Seniors	Senior Center	1 pm
Democratic Party	Civic Center	6 pm
Hospital Auxiliary	Third Monday of each month: Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	6 pm
YH Plan Comm.	Third Tuesday of each month: YH City Hall	5 pm
Co. Comm. Mtg	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Blairsville store	5:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 pm
Quilting Bee	Third Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
MOAA	Call Joff @ 386-530-0904	
Book Bunch & Lunch	Daniels Steakhouse	11:30 am

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$25. Out of County (1 Year) \$30. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee
Phone: (706) 896-4454 **Fax:** (706) 896-1745 **Email:** tcherald@windstream.net
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546

Towns County Herald

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