

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Greatest Generation

They amaze and have mentored me - Our Greatest Generation elders are responsible for much of my worthwhile ef-

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



orts in this life from their kind mentoring and have often amazed me with their longevity. Often I wonder if I can become anywhere near their wise examples. This lady, whom I've never met, Rae Weisbruch is one of those, reminding me of those great ones here in Towns County like Bud Johnson, Shirley Sonnenfeld, Todd Kimsey and many others who have been ordered to come Home by our Supreme Commander.

Rae recently celebrated her 100th birthday, having volunteered for our Women's Army Corps during WWII. Incidentally there were over 150,000 of those fine REAL American ladies who were determined to aid our homeland, America in our fight for Freedom and Liberty for all. She was assigned to be an assistant to an Army Air Corps flight instructor. While doing her duty in instrument flight training courses, she met Stanley Weisbruch, of whom was written, as being a "young scrappy pilot". His next mission was flying the hump of the Himalayas.

In 1943 or 1944 from their first meeting in that classroom true love and devotion bloomed into marriage in September, 1944. Per their son, John Weisbruch, "Then Dad left to fly missions from India to Burma in the area that is now modern day Bangladesh." John goes on to say, "My mom and dad were both proud to serve." He also helps to care for his elderly mom. In that effort they BOTH had a desire to continue serving America which began their continual giving to the DAV's charitable gift annuity program.

Rae only receives a small portion of her deceased husband, Stanley's pension. Whereas the DAV annuity program benefits disabled Veterans she is also earning a supplemental income. So many of our Greatest Generation have continued to serve America in many and various ways like Rae they describe their services as "opportunity". How many of today's population love America as much as our WWII generation? And from my humble perspective, not only would America not exist without them, I most certainly would NOT! Be advised, our Supreme Commander is calling these GREAT Americans home at a fast pace, ergo there are not many of them left. Consider yourself blessed when and if you meet any of these few remaining Americans, and spend time with them. It will become a win-win opportunity! God Bless them all!

-Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Easter Morning

Dear Editor,

As we approach Easter season, we are once again in awe of what Jesus did for mankind on the cross. Oh, that we might embrace the love of a Savior and the wondrous love He showers on us each day and night. To feel His eternal love cascading down into the depths of our soul. To know the love of Jesus as He hung on that cross and shed His blood for the sins of mankind. Our Lord and Savior, while dying on the cross, still took the time to think of us and even to pardon a thief who called out to Him as Jesus said to the thief, today you will be with me in paradise. Oh, what kind of love comes down from the throne of grace and takes our place that sets us free from our chains that held us in darkness into the glorious light that only a heavenly Father could provide. Oh, the cross that made the difference like living water flowing freely from the Rock of Ages we sing about.

The cruelty and beauty of that cross where Christ died on that Friday Day as Jesus' last words were, It is finished, and then He died and was put into a borrowed tomb and Satan was dancing and shouting, for he thought he had won the victory. But little did he know that on the third day, Sunday, Jesus arose from the dead victoriously over death and the grave and another nail was put in Satan's quiver of defeat. Lord, we cannot express our humble gratitude when you said your final words. It is finished, which means that those who choose to follow Jesus can have the abundant life here and now, for the old life is gone and a new life begins as the Holy Spirit comes and lives in each believer's heart. No other religion in the world can lay claim to this promise for an eternal life with God when He calls us home or comes back to gather His own upon Himself.

May this Easter Sunday bring you joy unspeakable and be full of praise in worshipping the One true living God that has a better plan in eternity for all who come and embrace the wonder of God's amazing grace and everlasting love. The stanza of "At The Cross" - At the cross where I first saw the light, And the burden of my heart rolled away. It was there by faith I received my sight. And now I am happy all the day.

Frank F. Combs

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Towns County Community Calendar

First Monday of each month: School Board... HS/MS Media Center	6:45 pm
Every Tuesday: Storytime for Children... TC Library	10:30 am
First Tuesday of each month: Hiaw. City Council... City Hall YH City Council... YH City Hall	6 pm 6:30 pm
Second Tuesday of each month: Conventions & Visitors Board... Civic Center	8 am
Second Wednesday of each month: Board of Elections... Elections Office	4 pm
Third Monday of each month: Planning Commission... Temporary Courthouse	6 pm
Third Tuesday of each month: Commissioner's Mtg... Courthouse City of Young Harris Planning Commission... Meeting Room in City Hall Water Board... Water Office	5:30 pm 5 pm 6 pm



Hydraulically Fractured

Familiarity, if it fails to breed contempt, can surely bring ambivalence. For this reason I'm grateful for the occasional visitor or new neighbor who reminds me of how blessed we are to live where and how we do tucked away here in our hills and valleys. We have our share of trials and tribulations, but we are not daily confronted by the level of drama and stress endured by those who live otherwise, unless we do so by our own choice.

Human nature has always provided human life with an almost unlimited capacity for complexity and drama. The wheel of history turns, sometimes repeating, sometimes rhyming, but always powered by the same engine. After several generations of relative peace and prosperity at home in the US, our wheel has hit a pothole not uncommon in the historical record. We begin to long for a smoother track, a return to simpler times, even if we have never actually experienced those times.

The irony is that the discovery, or rediscovery of that simplicity can in great measure be achieved by a single movement of the hand: A click, a swipe, or the push of a button.

It's obvious that a world of 7 billion people provides more pain and suffering than any single person can comprehend. In time, that pain and suffering will visit each one of us in turn. Yet even when death is not knocking at our own doors, we seek tragedy like moths to a flame. Open the laptop, turn on the phone or the television, and there it is in unlimited abundance, and what is seen cannot be unseen.

It would be impossible to absorb it all. We could click and swipe and gaze 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and still fail to scratch the surface of the human drama available to behold. For God so loved the world, but we are not divine. Nevertheless, we prefer to think of ourselves as caring and compassionate. Many of us find ways to turn that compassion into action, but for most of us, we are faced with numerous limitations physical, financial or emotional in our capacity to help.

Enter social media, and the ever shortening pathway to social unrest. Here's what happens:

The mechanism used by information pushers for selecting tragedy to deal is a carefully researched and well maintained machine. The nightly shooting report is available in every city with a television station. Occasionally a tragedy contains the necessary dramatic elements to become part of the national narrative, and it is distributed across all information networks.

We rarely stop to ask why a particular story is selected. It just appears, already accompanied by the usual celebrity reactions and reactions to reactions, the slams, the "push backs." When the drama appears on social media, it's our turn to participate. Most of us will add the appropriate pixels, the thumbs up, the likes, the hearts, the angry pixel faces. We type a few lines of condolence or pixel prayers. We think we are informed. We feel like we have helped in some way, and we go about our business. No harm done. No help, but no harm.

A growing number of us, however, go the extra pixel mile. We help stir the pot. We express our personal outrage. We've had enough. This has got to stop. We know who the enemy is and we're not going to be nice about it anymore.

This is known as "trauma hijacking" or "trauma appropriation," which happens when a person who has not experienced a tragedy takes over the narrative and makes the issue about their own outrage or upset. "I'm so upset I'm literally shaking." In a culture tilting towards narcissism, this process can be highly contagious, and it makes us extremely vulnerable to manipulation, to political or social goals that we may or may not share.

Media now injects information into our society like hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," and the result is just as flammable. The horror recently visited upon Nashville is a prime example. The infosomal drama regurgitation matrix injected the Nashville narrative into the widening fractures of opinion about gun control, gender and even race, but here's what that matrix failed to tell us:

Over the last 24 years there have been 174 deaths caused by school shootings. In 2021 alone, there were 465 deaths of children under the age of 19, in 9 cities alone. More than 1400 people were shot in Philadelphia alone in the first 8 months of 2022.

Why were these tragedies not made part of the national narrative? Where was the outpouring of sympathy, support or outrage? Why didn't we see these names posted on social media to be clicked over?

Those deaths and injuries did not fit the narrative. The majority of the victims as well as the perpetrators were black people. The majority were poor. Gang activity was a big factor. We are more than willing to argue the pros and cons of controlling the access to guns for average Americans, but we don't talk about guns in the hands of the very people who suffer the most from their misuse. In some of the cities suffering the most from violent crime, the charges are reduced or not even adjudicated in some misguided attempt at achieving "social" justice.

Media and political fracking has conflated the issues, fracturing us into believing that the issue of violence is about guns or race. The roots of the problem are much less complicated. Consider this: Repeated studies show that children who experience even mild malnutrition are significantly more likely to have IQ scores of 89 or less, and the likelihood increases with the level of malnutrition. Children who experience trauma early in life are much more susceptible to mood disorders, depression, suicide, substance abuse, anger control issues, even chronic disease later in life. These effects are independent of race, social and economic status.

It is the poverty of inner cities, not race or the availability of guns, which is driving the cycle of violence there. Trauma and stress are also the perennial companions of poverty, and now trauma is injected into the national consciousness by pixel pushers, as well as being self-replicating over social media.

Instantaneously, continuously, repeatedly, politics and pandering is injected into our lives, merging with our subconscious thought and emotional processing. It is fracturing the most vulnerable of us, our children who live so much of their mental and emotional lives hunched over their phones. It guarantees that their future mental and emotional lives, even their physical health, will be burdened by challenges they did not have to face.

It makes you wonder, doesn't it, about the intentions of those entities responsible for the fracking?

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

Blueberries

I think that most people enjoy eating a handful of blueberries. Eating them always reminds me of my grandfather because he always puts them on his cereal in the morning. Blueberries grow pretty well here, but there are a few things to be aware of so let's talk about those so that you can have a successful blueberry crop.

If you are selecting a site to plant blueberries, choose a place that will receive full sun for at least half a day. They can grow in shady spots, but the fruit production will be less. Blueberries like soil with a pH of 4.5 - 5.2. This trait makes them well adapted to native soils because most of our soils will naturally be in that range. Therefore, lime is probably not needed when planting blueberries. Rabbiteyes do best with 5 - 6 feet between plants in row and 11 - 12 feet between rows. When planting make sure you don't plant too deep. After planting prune back 1/3 to 1/2 of the plant. This will cause the plant to focus on developing its root system. The first year you want to pick off any blooms, because you want the plant to put its energy into growing roots and not fruit. You can apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 after the plant has begun to put on leaves the first year. The second year after planting put out 2 oz. of 10-10-10 in March and July. Make sure not to over fertilize blueberries, as that can harm them. After the third season, apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 per foot of height on the bush.

Blueberry bushes do require pruning each year. Once plants reach 6 feet high you'll want to start cane renewal pruning. This means removing 1 - 3 of the biggest canes each winter at ground level. Over a period of 5 years the bush will be completely renewed. New canes are going to bear more fruit than old canes so it's important to maintain this pruning process. If you have bushes that haven't been pruned for a few years, it might take several seasons to get bushes into the 5-year rotation. After you've picked the fruit, you can top plants if they are over 6 feet tall. This will keep bushes at a more manageable height.

Blueberries aren't bothered by many insects or diseases. However, one disease to look out for is mummy berry. It will cause berries to shrivel up and drop. The berries that drop carry the pathogen over to the next year. Therefore, it's important to keep the space beneath your bushes sanitary. Remove any old berries, wood, and leaves. Placing thick mulch around the base of plants will help prevent the disease from spreading as well. Captan is an effective fungicide at controlling mummy berry, but the timing of the application is very important. You must apply it while the flowers are in bloom because that is when the infection occurs. You must spray Captan every 7-10 days during bloom. Serenade is another product that you can spray instead of Captan that is organic, but it is not as effective.

If you have questions about growing blueberries contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

UGA extension
 Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Empowering Parents

For years, the Left has unabashedly waged war on parents — pushing radical policies that hinder children's learning and leave parents voiceless. From woke Critical Race Theory instruction to dangerous gender ideology measures, Democrat officials have worked hand in hand with teachers unions to turn schools across the country into hubs for indoctrination. For example, the Biden Administration is threatening Title IX by allowing the National Collegiate Athletic Association to permit biological men to compete in women's and girls' sports.

Under the purview of the Biden Administration, parents concerned about their child's education have faced unwarranted and unconstitutional tactics to silence their legitimate claims. In fact, the White House and Department of Justice notoriously colluded with the National School Boards Association to target parents voicing their concerns at school board meetings. As the Weaponization of the Federal Government Subcommittee recently reported, there was no legitimate basis for the Biden Administration to use federal law enforcement and counterterrorism resources on these parents — who were simply exercising their First Amendment rights to protect their children.

Furthermore, the senseless and unscientific education policies pursued by Democrats during COVID-19 severely damaged children's learning. Roughly half of American students started behind in at least one subject this past school year — marking a 13% increase from the national average in years prior to 2020. Undoubtedly, school closures and remote learning also had disastrous impacts on children's mental health and development.

In light of these misguided policies, we must ensure parents remain the primary stakeholders in their children's education — not the radical Left, not woke bureaucrats, and certainly not corrupt teachers unions.

Thankfully, House Republicans are delivering on our promise to create a future that's built on freedom by empowering parents. Last week, we passed H.R. 5, the Parents Bill of Rights, which guarantees that parents have the:

- Right to know what's being taught in schools and to see reading material
- Right to be heard
- Right to see school budget and spending
- Right to protect their child's privacy
- Right to be updated on any violent activity at school

You may be pleased to know that we also passed numerous amendments that strengthen this critical legislation. For example, we successfully added amendments that require schools to report when transgender students join girls' sports teams or are allowed to use girls' restrooms and locker rooms. In addition, schools must obtain parents' consent to change a child's name, gender, or pronouns.

I proudly voted for H.R. 5, as I believe it's past time that we empower parents by ensuring they have the rights and resources needed to protect their children's education. Please know that I remain committed to supporting policies that restore parents' voices and help students struggling from years of unnecessary remote learning, as well as fighting back against the Left's escalating indoctrination in classrooms across the country.

United States Congressman
 Representative
 Andrew Clyde



Towns County Herald

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