

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

VFW Ladies and Important Reminder

Once again we need to take notice and honor our ladies, wives, mothers, grandmothers, sisters and those women who enlist, we just simply cannot do without them. They often stay behind, taking care of our children, homes and worrying about their loved ones who are deployed. Their time, fortitude, energies and strengths are immeasurable. They too serve our nation, often unnoticed, and oftentimes un-honored or taken for granted. And they have to have a sense of humor to "put up" with us men, at times! On Saturday 2 April 2016 our ladies of VFW Auxiliary Post 7807 assisted by volunteers from our American Legion Auxiliary and many other volunteers with our Pickleball Association spearheaded and were very successful, in spite of the cold wind, in their fundraising "Pickleball Tournament". Fun and fellowship was unavoidable! Minus our many fine ladies, VFW, Legionnaires and Pickleball players, friends who volunteered, this event could never have happened. Thank you, ladies! And thanks to the public for donations, bids, and purchases which will benefit our community, via events sponsored by our Veterans and our dearly loved Auxiliaries.

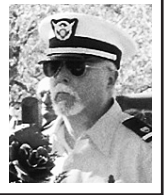
Please do not let this slip by! GMVHOF. We are not without many fine Veterans who deserve this honor, here in our North Georgia Mountain communities. You know several no doubt. Do your part and nominate someone as follows: Recipients of this prestigious award are capped at fifteen per year, and in order to qualify must have served in one of our five armed services, have an Honorable Discharge and a DD-214, being either born in Georgia, entered the military in Georgia or lived in Georgia for no less than ten years, serving in a Georgia based unit counting towards that criteria. There are three categories for nominees 1 - VALOR; 2 - Achievement; 3 - and Service, having made significant contributions to community, state or nation after military service. Valor is HEAVILY weighted for choosing those who will receive this recognition, and the Veteran may be alive or deceased. Thus far, we have 49 inductees permanently and rightfully honored in the GMVHOF. The annual Induction Ceremony and Banquet is held in November when approximately 15 nominees will be selected to be inducted, forevermore into our GMVHOF. The Independent Selection Committee (ISC) do not know each other, never meet as a group and selections from all nominees are immune to political, monetary or any other type outside influence, making this process as fair, unbiased, un-influenced, and honest as possible. All nominees will be considered for up to three consecutive years, with no further action required. Do YOU know anyone you wish to nominate?!

Please go here for more information: www.GMVHOF.org. Or contact Paul Longgear at 706-302-2220 or PaulLonggear@yahoo.com or Rick White at rickwhite4750@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions of nominees will be Friday 26 August 2016, so please follow up in a timely fashion. This year's Fourth Annual Induction Ceremony will be held at Saint Luke Ministry Center, 301 11th Street Columbus, GA.

Semper Paratus

The Veterans' Corner

Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Let's Talk about the Weather

This morning I'm writing while keeping one eye on the weather, hoping that by the time you read this the rains will have come again. We haven't suffered for the lack of rain in our area during this most recent El Nino, but parts of North Georgia are already considered "abnormally dry," and just the other day I saw an "Extreme Danger" warning for fire in front of a forestry center. It is strange to me, from my limited perspective, how we so often now have days of rain followed immediately by windy and dry conditions of low humidity. Just a few days ago, and only two days after a rain, the humidity at home read 15% - dry enough for an ember or a cigarette butt to start a fire. Soil moisture is good and the creeks and springs in our neighborhood are full, but the top of the ground is dry and crunchy.

As a beekeeper I remember the many mornings in June when the mist would lay on the mountains until almost mid-day. Ideal conditions for bees to gather nectar from sourwood trees. We don't see many days like that here anymore (and that "sourwood" honey on the shelf is often something else entirely.)

It used to be that weather was something we talked about to fill an awkward silence or when all other conversational topics had been exhausted. Today, weather is arguably one of the most interesting, and often controversial topics available. The interest derives from several factors. Weather information is ubiquitous and available at a touch. Practically anything connected to the internet can tell you the temperature if not the local forecast. Weather talkers are media stars and weather talking is a sophisticated production that is, well, it's interesting and often entertaining.

The controversy comes from the political grease paint that has somehow been smeared onto the science of weather. In a scenario as implausible as the one created by Johnathan Swift in "Gulliver's Travels," where war was waged over whether to crack open an egg on the big or little end, our political operatives have endeavored to attach our beliefs about weather onto a kind of litmus test for liberal or conservative viewpoints.

It is perhaps a bit more complicated than that, when consider the question of whether our addiction to burning fossil fuels is the driving force behind climate change, or whether these changes result from natural cycles. Whatever the case, the scientific data is clear: The climate has always and will always change.

To argue too much over the identity of the culprit seems, at this point, to be akin to standing on the Titanic arguing over whether the sinking of the ship was due to the pilot or the iceberg. Climate change has moved and/or erased civilizations from the planet many times in our past. Glaciers grow and retreat. Agricultural lands become arid and deserts become wetlands. Sea levels rise and fall.

What is different about the current situation compared to the distant past is that now we have crowded into every corner of the globe. We have built cities on coastlines, flood plains, even on fault lines. We have made deserts bloom making large portions of our food supply dependent on our ability to irrigate those deserts. With little or no acknowledgment of what has happened to the climate in the past, we have gambled on climate stability which, for whatever reason, may be in the process of entering a new phase of transition.

The solutions to the problem would appear to be simple, but almost impossible to achieve. One direct approach would be to stop making so many humans. The developed world has almost achieved this with near zero population growth. However China just ended its one child policy, and the Deep State of the western world is intent on redistributing third world populations to support our tapeworm economy. (Add the challenges of mass migration to our weather woes.) Fewer people would mean less fuel to be burned and fewer humans crowded into vulnerable areas of the planet, but creatures under stress are compelled by the biological imperative to have more, not fewer offspring.

Using alternative forms of energy might indeed help to cool the planet, but it would certainly reduce the destruction wrought by digging, drilling, blasting, fracking, polluting, and all the side effects of a fossil fuel economy. Unfortunately big oil still has a firm grip on the rudder, still buys and sells politicians, still controls the fate of millions.

So again, no matter what we do in the short term, the climate will continue to change, and often in ways that we cannot predict. According to some scientists, our climate is like a gigantic barge heading out of control to crash into the dock, and it is too late to try and steer a new course. The geological record tells us that the climate has changed many times in the past, and often abruptly. Perhaps it is past time for trying to assign blame for the change, and instead endeavor to prepare to adapt to it.

As I look out the window at the mountains around me, I wonder how many changes they have witnessed over the millennia, and yet here they are covered with life which has adapted to those changes. I am grateful once again to live in this area, where change is often much more gentle in nature than it is in so many other parts of the world.

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

Herb Gardening

Herbs have been grown since ancient times and used as both flavorful food additions and medicines. They are hardy plants that can thrive in a variety of conditions, making them an excellent choice for beginning gardeners and experienced green thumbs alike.

Herb garden establishment and maintenance is similar to vegetable gardens. Most herbs do well in average, well-drained soil with a pH of 6.5-7.0, and flourish with at least 6 hours of sunlight. Planning what herbs you want in your garden is important because what most are hardy, some require different conditions than most.

Rosemary and lavender prefer a soil pH of 7.5, and basil, chives and parsley require more fertilizer to replenish their leaves because they are harvested so often. Once you have established which herbs you want to plant and have tested your soil, it is important to till well and make the required amendments (lime, fertilizer, etc). After planting, mulching is highly recommended to control weeds and keep diseases at bay.

You can propagate herbs in a variety of ways. Seeding is one of the most common methods. Seeds should be planted in late winter or very early spring and kept indoors so they will be ready to transplant after the frost-free date.

In our mountain climate, there is a possibility of frost up until May 15th, so keep immature and delicate plants indoors until mid-May. Seeds should be planted only half the depth of their diameter, so simply pushing them into the soil and lightly covering them is sufficient. Once the seedlings have 2-4 leaves, they can be transplanted into a larger container or the garden. Make sure to water the transplants well.

Herbs can also be propagated by cuttings. To do this, cut about 4 inches of new growth from a mature plant containing 3 nodes or more. This cut should be made just below the node (where a leaf joins the stem). Remove the bottom node, and insert the cutting into potting medium up to the lowest node. Keep the soil warm and consistently moist until the cutting has taken root, or after about 6 weeks. At this point, your new herb plant can be added to the garden.

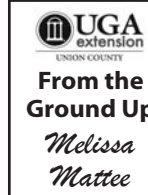
Container gardening is another option for planting your herbs and works well both indoors and outdoors. Make sure they are in a place where they can get the required 6 hours of sunlight and are potted with potting soil for adequate drainage, not garden soil.

Water your container herbs only when dry to prevent the roots from rotting. Keeping outdoor herbs in containers is also a good solution for frost prevention. On cold days, plants can be brought indoors to protect them from freezing damage.

Once your herb plants are matured, you can use them in a variety of ways. You can pluck leaves directly off the plant and use them immediately in cooking. Bunches of cut herbs can be dried by tying them together and hanging them in a dark, dry, well-ventilated area such as an attic or garage for later use. Cut herbs can be frozen after they are rinsed and patted dry.

Whether you want a fragrant flowering herb for your garden or a savory plant that you can cook with, herbs offer a variety of uses that can be appreciated by any gardener.

If you'd like more information on starting your own herb garden or are interested in learning about different herbs to add to one you already have, contact our office to receive our herb gardening publication.



From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee

Letters to The Editor

To the Editor:

I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for supporting the VFW Auxiliary fundraising event "Play With A Vet" on Saturday, 2 April. We raised in excess of \$2,100 with organized fundraising events and support from the community. This will make for a great year.

Thank you once again for your generosity, time and effort that the volunteers all put into making this event such a huge success.

Kind regards,
Julie Andrews
President, VFW Auxiliary

Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes

Spring has come to the mountains and with it we are planning for our 8th annual fundraiser for the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes. With that in mind, I thought it would be a good time to talk about what the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes are and how they came about.

From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

The purpose of the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes is, in the words of the Sheriffs' Association, "to give our state's most at-risk children the love, safety, and structure needed to become mature, successful adults."

The Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes grew out of a concern that the sheriffs of Georgia have for abused and neglected children. During the 1950s, the sheriffs noticed that this was a growing problem across the state and began to consider ways to make a difference in the lives of these children who had become victims of abuse and neglect. The sheriffs considered this project vital for these children and for our state.

In 1960, Georgia's sheriffs were able to open the first Georgia Sheriffs' Boys Ranch near Hahira, GA. The Boys Ranch provided children an opportunity to learn "strong moral values, religious awareness, personal responsibility, teamwork and acceptance of authority, as well as how to overcome adversity." This first campus was only the start of a vision that would continue to grow. Today, there are four additional campuses that provide a nurturing atmosphere for boys and girls placed strategically across the state.

I believe that the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes provides opportunities for children to succeed. I believe that children deserve to be given a chance to become productive, successful, law abiding citizens. The Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes provides these children the opportunities that our nation's founders dreamed would be available to all children. Children in the Youth Homes learn that they are able to overcome their difficulties and, that if they work for it, they can obtain a better life for themselves. I think that our children deserve to be given a chance to succeed. This is why I continue to support the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

Over the next few weeks I will share more information about our fundraiser and how you can get involved in helping this great cause.



Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players Bingo	Every Monday: Village Condos Clubhouse Brasstown Manor	12:30 pm 9:30 am
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Thursday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Bridge Players	Every Friday: Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Basket Weavers	Second Wednesday of each month: SC Fire Hall	10 am
Board of Elections	Old Rock Jail	4 pm
Mtn. Comm. Seniors	Second Thursday of each month: Senior Center	1 pm
Democratic Party	Civic Center	5 pm
Square Dance Club	Second Friday of each month: Rec. Center	7 pm

Towns County Herald

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