

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Chuck Frisk, USMC - part two

Chuck represents the very embodiment of those many who have kept our America free through personal risk and sacrifice, for so many decades. He, like those of us, the "baby-boomer" generation had choices when he volunteered for the USMC.



The Veterans' Corner  
Scott Drummond  
USMC Veteran

Chuck started working an after school and summer job at the age of fourteen. He declined an athletic college scholarship, choosing instead to serve America. This disputes an often touted rumor concerning our so called "Gen-Xrs" and "millennials".

I would like to believe there are many more "youngsters" like Chuck in regards to the future existence of our Sovereign Republic. His choice of seeking his and his family's final home, here in Towns County is no different than choices made by many of our Veterans who moved here, in that the slower pace, tranquility and relatively crime free area is perfect for raising families and retiring.

He told me that his youth and hometown was similar as a small rural community, slower paced and more laid back. Most of us, like Chuck, wish not to change our environment, having spent many years in other type environs.

Chuck is nowhere close to retiring, as a productive member of our community he continues to work tirelessly, assisting in any and all job functions at Hiawassee Hardware. As are most veterans, Chuck is a true "giver", not a "taker". The folks there describe him as I do, "a great guy."

Chuck has a lot in common with the WWII Veterans who were my mentors as a child and on into today, including most all who have served. He is very humble, possessing a great sense of humor, positive attitude, willingness to help, and since I first met him last year, is never without a smile.

Yes, humility and integrity come to mind as positive traits possessed by Chuck and indeed most every Veteran that I have met who has either been born here or who has chosen to make our wonderful, slow paced North Georgia Mountain Community of Towns County their home.

Welcome Home, Chuck!

*Semper Paratus*

## Living in the future

On New Year's Eve, a friend of mine on the west coast asked some of his friends in the east for a preview of 2017— so that he could go to bed early, knowing that the world had survived into another year. Some of us decided that we would offer him a few tidbits of "wisdom" we had acquired from living in the "future," even though we were only three hours ahead.

My contribution was a bit of experiential wisdom purchased at great personal cost, and I share it now freely to keep with you always: Never buy pizza from under a light bulb at a gas station. Avoiding my mistake will increase your chances of living to see the future.

Upon further reflection, I decided that I could offer little else of value from three hours into the future, but how useful it might be to communicate with my friends and associates, or send a note to myself, 12 months into the past. Such are the musings we indulge in January as we reflect on the year just passed and make our resolutions for the future.

So, what might I tell someone living a year in the past? The first thing that comes to mind is this: The hours which can be consumed combing through information pertaining to politics in an election year, even with the goal of extracting a few kernels of truth from the chaff— can never be recovered. That time is gone forever, and would be much more valuable applied to activities like writing letters to friends and reading books.

In a note to myself a year ago, I would also remind me that my grandfather, who was right about so many things, was spot on when he said to be careful choosing who can be trusted in a discussion about politics. Friendship is a curious thing. Depending on its foundation and depth, it is subject to erosion. Sadly, many of the relationships we call friendship are shallow, or built on an unstable foundation which might crumble when exposed to disagreement. Books have been written about why people take politics so personally, and when we speak our personal truth about the subject we may discover that we have fewer friends than we thought. This is no tragedy, but the revelation, and the speed with which it can occur, can be quite shocking.

The next message I would send to the past is one which has occupied the pages of the Middle Path for years. We have tried to make the case that corporate media cannot be trusted, and 2016 demonstrated this clearly, with entities on both sides of the political contest going beyond the normal practices of spin and omission to indulge in just plain lying. Of course, propaganda and lying to the public are nothing new; they are far older than even the printing press, but what astounded me last year was the lack of artifice or sophistication applied to the fiction. The lies told by the candidates and their campaigns and disseminated by corporate media, were often outrageous and easy to debunk. But institutional liars are increasingly confident that even a boldface lie directed at the public carries no penalty, and millions of people still tune in to those same sources to guide their opinions about the world.

There is one final message from the future much more important than the sound and fury we have discussed today. It is a truth that can become painfully obvious during the holidays when we are most aware of the empty seats at the table. Both science and religion tell us that past, present and future are concurrent, so perhaps it is our future selves who

engender the inkling and the impulse to visit the relative or call the friend we haven't seen for a while. Without a doubt, a future already exists in which that dear one is no longer with us.

## The Middle Path

By: Dan Perry

## Composting

If you have a garden that you spend a lot of time in, you may want to think twice about throwing away coffee grounds or banana peels. Soil amendments and fertilizers can be costly, but you can condition your own organic matter to boost the nutrients in your garden for little to no cost at all by composting. Composting is a great way to recycle used materials that would otherwise be thrown away into a valuable, nutrient rich resource to be added to your vegetable gardens or flowerbeds. To compost efficiently, you need to follow four main steps:



UGA extension  
From the Ground Up  
Melissa Mattee

1. Maintain good aeration. Composting relies on the activity of tiny organisms called microbes, and in order to do their job effectively, they need air. If there is no air penetrating to the inner portions of your pile, this leads to foul smelling anaerobic activity. This should only be allowed if you have your compost in a closed container. Otherwise, make sure to turn your pile once or twice a month to aerate it. If the pile is not mixed, it can take up to three or four times longer to decompose!

2. Make sure there is enough moisture. If your compost pile becomes too dry, it will take longer to decompose. A dry compost pile can also be a fire hazard. When you make your pile, dampen every layer, but make sure it is not too soggy. If heavy rainfall completely saturates your compost pile, turn it more frequently than you normally would to let it dry out.

3. Add small particles. The bigger the things you add, the longer the microbes will take to break it down. If you add leaves to your pile, go over them with a lawn mower or rent a chipper for your branches and woody plant scrap.

4. Appropriate temperature maintenance. Your compost pile should stay between 110 and 160 degrees Fahrenheit because microbes can break down organic matter much quicker at higher temperatures. This high temperature also kills most pathogens and weed seeds so it does not spread to other plants when you add it to the soil. Despite this, it is best to avoid adding weeds or diseased plants to your pile if possible.

When preparing your compost pile, it is always important to layer your material appropriately. Always make an initial layer with coarser material that cannot be manually broken down into smaller pieces. This helps introduce oxygen into the pile and makes the process more efficient. The next layer should be ten inches deep with organic wastes such as leaves, plant trimmings, and old grass cuttings. Next, add about an inch of soil to make sure your pile has enough microbes to break down what you add to the pile. Finally, add a nitrogen source. This can be fertilizer such as ammonium sulfate (1/3 cup per 25 square feet) or a standard 10-10-10 (1 cup per square foot). Organic options include an inch or two of fresh grass clippings, blood meal and lake plants.

Another important factor to keep in mind is the carbon to nitrogen ratio. The C:N ratio is 30:1, and if you layer your material appropriately, you should have no problems. If the compost starts to smell foul, turn it a few extra times for a month or two to make sure there is enough air. A damp, sweet smelling heap that is still not decomposing can indicate a lack of nitrogen, and if the pile is warm only in the middle, you need to add more material.

For more information on composting, visit the extension office.

## Letters to The Editor

### To the Editor:

You have now published two letters by Mr. Gil Bullard, so I feel I must respond to his comments about the variance which a developer has requested of the Young Harris City Council for a student housing project. Because Mr. Bullard does not live in the city of Young Harris and is not a registered voter in Towns County, I'm curious about his deep concern— but, I'm also not surprised that much of his information is incorrect since, to my knowledge, he has not attended a council meeting to hear first-hand the discussion of this project, nor has he contacted me or anyone associated with the developer, architect or project manager.

Mr. Bullard also must not shop in this area, as he expressed in both letters his outrage that a five-story building would be proposed here. In plain view of the Ingles' grocery store in Hiawassee is a 6-story apartment building, and multi-story condominium complexes and other commercial— and religious— buildings that are the same height or taller than this building will be, can be found in both Towns and Union counties.

Nevertheless, the project at issue before Young Harris would only be four stories in height at the intersection of Highways 66 and 76, and no taller than buildings already in existence on the Young Harris College campus. A fifth floor is accommodated because of the descending elevation going west from the intersection, and makes possible the addition of a restaurant space which would provide a desirable amenity for the YHC campus community. The building is surrounded by attractive sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping, making the intersection appealing in appearance for the first time in the decade that I have lived here.

Yes, it could be built at a lower height— but that would consume the rest of the property that is designated for parking spaces, something the Young Harris City Council is adamant must be provided adjacent to the building.

Because Young Harris College also values the beauty of our surroundings, we asked the architect to evaluate sight lines on this project to assure that it would not block the mountain vistas from across the street— and it does not. We also asked the architect and developer to design a building that would fit the small town, rustic character of Young Harris, and I believe it does so splendidly.

I hope it might attract other development, because, after all, Young Harris is a college town. The college, which employs more than 300 people and is the largest employer in Towns County, exists because it enrolls almost 1200 college students here. At the present time, the city does not have one amenity outside of our campus geared toward college students, and this project— we hope— is a first step toward helping us overcome the biggest impediment we have, which is trying to attract, recruit, and retain students to a college when there is not even a semblance of a college town around us.

Mr. Bullard apparently does not understand the mindset of our "customers," the 18- to 24-year-olds who keep us in business. But, I firmly believe we can build a college town that is attractive to them (and to retirees and tourists) while also maintaining our efforts to highlight and enhance the beauty of our natural surroundings. Every project we have undertaken in the past decade has been built to the highest levels of quality, safety, and aesthetics, and this one, constructed in partnership with a private developer, will be no different.

Additionally, there is no evidence whatsoever that construction of this project will have a negative impact on the county's ISO rating, particularly if the county moves its current ladder truck to the nearest fire station to Young Harris. ISO ratings depend far more on the fact that our county is served by a volunteer fire department (rather than a paid-staff department) and on the quality and quantity of fire-fighting resources in the county (water, equipment, etc.).

This project has been under consideration now for more than eight months, and if this private developer were not working so closely with the college, it would have long ago left for a more business-friendly environment. We believe it will be good for our campus AND for our community, or we would not be pursuing it. Mr. Bullard, please contact me personally if you want to actually view the plans you have chosen to attack.

Sincerely,  
Cathy Cox,  
President, Young Harris College

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### 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.*

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## Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
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Bridge Players	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
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Mtn. Amat. Radio	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
Alzheimer's Supp.	McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	5:30 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Chamber Board	1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
Historical Society	Old Rec. Center	5:30 pm
Mtn. Comp. Users	www.mcug.org	6 pm
Planning Comm.	Courthouse	7 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Caregiver support	Brasstown Manor	3 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Alliance Chapel	6 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm

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## Towns County Herald

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