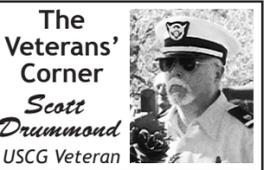


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Anniversary of Battle of Iwo Jima

Sunday, February 19, 2017 represents the momentous occasion of the 72nd anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima. As such we of Towns County and surrounding areas will have an opportunity to honor those Iwo Jima Veterans who live beside us, and to remember certain aspects of history and the costs of maintaining freedom, liberty and opportunity for our unique Sovereign Republic, our precious United States of America. Whereas on Monday February 20, 2017 at 2 PM at Towns County Recreation and Conference Center located at the top of Foster Park, we will have a gathering of patriots, distinguished guests, and Veterans to share fellowship, historical moments, remembrance, and refreshments. We are hoping we'll be honored with the presence of several of our Iwo Jima Veterans. A very special guest speaker will be retired US Army Brigadier General Bernard (Bernie) Fontaine. This event is sponsored by Towns County and Union County Veterans associations and our outstanding ladies auxiliaries from our VFW Post 7807 and our American Legion Post #23, Hiawassee. Open to the public, and the future of our nation, our children.



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran

Very brief historical overview: The Battle of Iwo Jima from February 19, 1945 to March 26, 1945 marks one of the key offensives by American forces to achieve victory in our WWII effort against the Japanese. This Japanese island is located 650 miles from Tokyo, midway between Japan and US bomber bases in the Marianas. The strategy anticipated was to allow for landing strips on Iwo Jima to accommodate escorts for our long range bombers, en route to bombing missions in Japan, to be defended from Japan's air assault by short range escorts. American naval forces, 450 ships had the island surrounded as never before, yet the Japanese, numbering approximately 22,060, were entrenched in over 16 miles of underground tunnels and interlocking caves. Even though our naval and air forces had commenced heavy shelling and bombing of the island on 15 June 1944, and continuing through the morning of 19 February 1945 our 30,000 Marines of 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine Divisions encountered very heavy resistance. We had committed more than 60,000 US Marines, several thousand US Navy Seabees, alongside our US Navy, Army, Air Force, and Coast Guardsmen who represent, to this day the very best of American determination and love of country.

Mount Suribachi, on the south end of this small island where our Marines raised the first flag on this rough volcanic island is often thought of as the final chapter of this horribly expensive piece of real estate, wasn't the final task of our Marines and our entire amphibious landing forces tough mission. The Motoyama Plateau on the northern end was yet heavily defended and had to be taken.

These young men of the Marines, Navy, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard well aware of these hardships in advance, were not deterred, knowing they were there for our USA, you and I. Never, ever forget them; always honor our men and women of our armed forces.

Semper Paratus

Was Andy Warhol right?

Perhaps Andy Warhol was right and everyone will eventually get 15 minutes of fame. Considering how we are all under constant surveillance now, we might get even more than that.



Today's offering is a swashbuckling tale of belt tightening in the Age of Information. First, the backstory.

With rising medical and insurance costs under the continuing monetization of the human condition, my wife and I decided a few years ago that the best quality health insurance available was a healthy lifestyle. We are miles from any health club, and exercise equipment at home tends to be used more often for processing laundry than for actual exercise. We have been uninspired by the fitness wonders of the digital age, like the apps and devices that monitor what we eat and what we do. (There is even a device that monitors bowel movements and uploads that information to the cloud.)

We did, however, rediscover a very effective health program in our own backyard. It's called, "mountain," and it provides a remarkable range of aerobic and strength training exercises. One of my favorite accessories to this program is called "wheelbarrow," and there are many other attachments available, such as "chainsaw," and "shovel," as well as some great subroutines like "garden" and "firewood."

These components can be effectively combined in a variety of ways, and when tied together by the practice of Iron Shirt and yoga, a number of outstanding personalized health programs can be designed. As a result of our own program, my wife and I lost over 35 pounds each in under two years. Which brings us to the swashbuckling tale of our recent trip to civilization.

I should have known something was up. As I was talking to my wife on the way to Home Depot, my phone, lying forgotten on the console, asked me to repeat something I had just said. "Stop eavesdropping," I said. There was no reply.

My wife likes to remind me quite often that my wardrobe has not yet been updated to match my farm physique. As a result of this, from time to time I find myself compelled to tighten my belt. I have noticed that this problem is shared by many guys who are not enamored of the hip-hugging styles that follow the national pop culture obsession with buttocks, and many of us still prefer as much fabric as possible between our belly buttons and the outside elements, especially during the winter months.

Such was the case at Home Depot. The pants were falling down, but the restroom was half a mile away on the other side of the store. Modesty led me to make my way to the back of an aisle where I looked around to make sure I was alone.

As I reached under my jacket to undo my belt, I heard a loud beeping behind me. I turned around to see - me. There I was on one of those little screens that are placed unobtrusively around many of today's retail stores. A light was flashing red, and bold letters scrolled across the screen saying, "You are being recorded. Shoplifting is a crime."

"I'm lifting my drawers, not shoplifting," I said to no one there. But taking advantage of the opportunity, I did a little dance for the Peeping Tom algorithm or the bored monitor of monitors who might have been observing me from a data center somewhere. I'm almost ashamed to admit it (but not quite), that I added a gesture of universal sign language to my recording. (I hope that my little gesture has not marred my moment of fame, but judging from what I've seen on Netflix lately, I rather think not.)

With a final flourish I removed my jacket for effect, and also because it suddenly seemed warmer than when I first entered the store. I left Home Depot, turned off my phone, and headed to Lowes to make my purchase. There I was able to find exactly what I needed with no flashing lights - and with relative anonymity.

You can draw your own conclusions from our latest episode of modern life. Technology and the inexorable turning of generations is tearing down traditional values and practices so fast that it is hard to gauge what is being built to replace them. But one thing seems certain: Guys, if you are seeking your own moment of fame and glory, just go to the back of aisle 12 at the nearest Home Depot and hike up your drawers.

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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Crepe Myrtle care

Many of us are aware of National Arbor Day as it is celebrated on the last Friday in April, but did you know that Georgia's State Arbor Day is observed on the third Friday in February? Though it is more pleasant to plant trees in the cool spring weather than the cold wet winter, February is one of the best times to plant trees in Georgia. The cold weather keeps trees in dormancy, decreasing the risk of transplant shock. If trees begin new growth and are then transplanted, there is a much greater risk of damaging and stressing the tree.



From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee

Always be sure to keep the planting site in mind when you choose your tree. Though you can amend soil to a certain extent, you cannot always change sun exposure, soil drainage, and precipitation. Test your soil before planting so you know the pH, nutrient quality and the soil texture before planting. Finally, be aware of man-made structures that can affect growth such as underground pipes, utility lines and rights-of-way.

Though for most plants, incorporating organic matter into the soil is always recommended, this is not necessarily the case with trees. It is much more important to have consistent organic material presence throughout the life of the tree than ensuring there is a lot in the initial planting hole. Mulch is the best organic source as it protects the roots, retains moisture and prevents weeds. The mulch is eventually naturally incorporated into the soil over time, increasing the overall soil quality consistently over a long period of time.

Many shade trees are bought balled and burlapped, container grown, or bare-root. Each of these types has a different ideal time that it should be planted. For balled and burlapped, plant in late fall if you can. Container-grown trees should be planted early to late fall, and bare-root should be planted in late winter. Though these are the ideal times for each tree, they can probably also handle being planted either in late fall or late winter, which is why Georgia Arbor Day is so late in February. Balled and burlapped trees should always have a moist root ball. If the soil is cracking, the root ball has become too dry and the tree will likely decline after planting. When selecting a container grown tree, check to see that the roots have not circled two thirds of the trunk. If this is the case, it has become pot bound and will have trouble establishing in the landscape. When planting, disturb the root ball by making two to four vertical cuts into it. Untangle some of the roots and allow them to incorporate them into the backfill soil. Make sure the roots of the trees are moist at all times, but never in standing water.

For a list of trees appropriate to our zone, contact your local extension office.

Don't forget about our soil health field day on February 17th at GMREC. Registration and refreshments begin at 9 a.m. and presentations begin at 10 a.m. Topics include ideal soil profiles, improving soil health, federal conservation programs, and soil testing and interpretation. Lunch is provided and the program concludes at 1 p.m.

Union and Towns County Extension will hold the Annual Northeast Georgia Corn Production meeting will be Wednesday, February 22 from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center. There will be pesticide credit available at this meeting: one hour for private applicators and three hours for commercial applicators in category 21. Please RSVP by 5:00pm Friday, February 17th to the Union County Extension Office at (706) 439-6030. Lunch will be provided!

Letters to The Editor

Editor:

I am unwilling to respond in kind to the rude comments of a February 1 contributor to the TCH. Therefore, I will minimize my own comments to him. Sir, I urged Commissioner Bradshaw to begin to address some unsightly areas in Towns County. I will humbly take no credit (I've never met or spoken to him), but if you read (see pages 1A and 10A of that same February 1 edition) the remarks he made to the Movers and Shakers on January 27, you will see that he has begun to do so. So, yes, I'm still around and the only thing I'm holding is the hope that Commissioner Bradshaw's efforts (a) to begin to improve the appearance of, and (b) to bring businesses to, Towns County will be productive.

Penultimately, to quote Winston Churchill, "Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary. It fulfills the same function as pain in the human body. It calls attention to an unhealthy state of things."

Finally, I don't believe the commissioner or the citizens (to include the contributor) of Towns County really believe the shortcomings I earlier described represent the "real" Towns County or its potential.

Claude Spears

To the Editor:

Dear Mr. Riley:
In 1908, when my then-fifteen year-old dad stood in line at Ellis Island, waiting to be processed, was he subjected to "extreme vetting"? Those immigration officials asked him questions about his country of origin, they inspected him for signs of communicable disease; they palpated his armpits, his groin, his neck; they examined his satchel, his fingernails, his teeth, his eyes; they wrote his family history... Those same officials treated the other two million immigrants the same: immigrants from all the nations of Europe and from all around the Mediterranean, who, that year, like my dad, were required to stand patiently, unobtrusively, humbly, in line at Ellis Island.

Were they all subjected to "extreme vetting"? How does that "vetting" compare to today's "extreme vetting"? What, exactly, defines such examinations, such evaluations, as "extreme"?

Color me curious.

George A. Mitchell

P.S. In 1924, my dad graduated from the Dental College of the University of Louisville, Kentucky. He had mastered the English language. He received no largesse, was made no promises, was offered no guarantees.

He practiced Dentistry for 55 years and became a pillar in his community and church.

Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!
Contact us at 706-896-4454
Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM

POLITICAL TALKING POINT

THE MOST COMMON GUN CONTROL ISSUE

Towns County Community Calendar

Bingo	Every Monday: Briarstone Manor	9:30 am
Bridge Players	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
Every Tuesday: Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday Red Cross Building	7 pm
Free GED prep.	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
Hospital Auxiliary	Third Monday of each month: Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	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
Quilting Bee	Third Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
MOAA	Call Jack @ 828-321-2896	
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month: Clubhouse	6 pm
Goldwing Riders	Third Saturday of each month: Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
Red Cross DAT	Fourth Monday of each month: 1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Lions Club	Fourth Tuesday of each month: Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Republican Party	Fourth Thursday of each month: New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
Square Dance Club	Fourth Friday of each month: Rec. Center	7 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Last Thursday of each month: Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

Towns County Herald
Legal Organ of Towns County

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Derek Richards Advertising Director	Shawn Jarrard Staff Writer	Lily Avery Staff Writer	Website: townscountyherald.net

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