

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Military town, Ft. Walton Beach

Another terrific story about another American Hero... Eglin Joint Base Command located near Ft. Walton Beach, Florida, encompasses a large contingent of Air Force units, Naval Warfare units, and the 7th Army Special Forces, and 6th Army Rangers.

**The Veterans' Corner**  
*Scott Drummond*  
 USCG Veteran



Most folks in the USA don't live in a military town, with lots of guys in uniform walking the streets and jets overhead daily.

They go on with their lives unaware of what a military town is all about. And that's OK... but I want to share with y'all what it's like to live in a military town.

We see guys in uniform all the time, we have state of the art, high performance aircraft in the air nearby all day long.

We hear the "sound of freedom" when an F-22, or F-35 streaks over the house... and we read in the local paper, some times daily, but at least weekly, of the loss of one of our own in combat in the Middle East. And that is what brings me to the reason for this email.

Staff Sergeant Mark DeAlencar was killed on April 8th. He was an Army Special Forces soldier stationed here in the Fort Walton area. He had a family. In January he deployed, again, to Afghanistan. He promised his adopted daughter Octavia that he would be home for her High School Graduation.

He didn't make it. But she went to graduation yesterday anyway. And in the audience were eighty (80) US Army Special Forces soldiers from her dad's unit in full Parade Dress Uniform.

Additionally, they brought their families to be with them as well.

And as Octavia ascended the steps to the stage to receive her diploma they all silently stood up.

And when she was presented her diploma they all cheered, clapped, whistled ... and yes cried.

Everyone in attendance then stood up and cried and cheered.

Octavia had graduated and yes she had lost her dad... but she had 80 other Dads to stand there with her and take his place.

This is the real America we all love... and I'm proud to be part of it.

God bless our men in uniform and their families who give so much.

It's the least we can do for Octavia and SSgt Mark DeAlencar, 7th Special Forces, United States Army.

This was forwarded to me by several great folks. The ease of copy/paste has little to do with why I chose to put this in my column. In Towns County, abundant with Veterans as well as fine civilians who may have never served, it would have been much harder for me to not share another one of thousands of reasons of why America exists with the readers of our great little *Towns County Herald*.

Never forget our real heroes. They aren't here with us.

*Semper Paratus*

## Throwing Shade

It's that time of year again, eagerly anticipated by some and dreaded by others. The Fair is back in town.

If you live in Hiawassee or Young Harris, or have to drive through them to get to work, you may be in the latter group.

Our small towns are served by one highway with limited options for bypass, so the effects of any increase in traffic are magnified by constriction.

On the other hand, if you have been to Atlanta recently or do much driving outside our area, you may not even notice the traffic. It's a matter of perspective.

Nevertheless, the summer months do generally see an increase in traffic here which peaks during the Fair. We'll find out next month what an eclipse will do for traffic. The last total solar eclipse in the United States was in June of 1918.

Traffic was not an issue, and we did not have the great instigator of the Internet to book every motel room and rental property in the area. Next month, millions of people across the US will travel to the narrow band where the eclipse will be total and spend approximately 7 minutes being reminded that we are all here together on a ball suspended in space.

It would behoove us to keep that fact in mind. The way we so often maneuver our gas burning climate controlled sports utility vehicles to be the first ones to the stop light, one might think that we consider ourselves to be individual planetary systems on four wheels.

Here's a thought experiment that might occupy our time while we're waiting in traffic. Think of all the motors running around us - the ones that got us to the traffic light, the ones cooling the interiors of our vehicles as well as our homes while we drive.

Think of every bit of asphalt we will cross, every structure we will see, every item on every shelf in every store and pretty much every single thing we will encounter during our climate controlled journeys from here to there. It was all brought to us by the burning of some kind of fuel.

Think of the billions of gallons of oil that were burned to create the world we think of as normal. Think of the wars that have been fought, and continue to be fought, to make it possible for us to consume what we so often take for granted:

Millions of little independent planets rushing to be the first climate controlled enclosure to get to the drive through window.

We are all so very important these days, and there is nothing like a little traffic to remind us of just how important that is.

Yet, we do share just the one planet, with its finite resources and limited space.

Perhaps an eclipse of the sun will throw some shade on our colossal egos and remind us of our limits.

A little humility, even seven minutes worth, would go a long way.

## The Middle Path

*By: Don Perry*

## Cucurbit pests

Right about now, gardens are hopefully laden with plenty of summer squash, melons, cucumbers and other tasty members of the gourd family (also known as cucurbits). However, a bountiful harvest can often mean a big boom in pests that happily enjoy the fruits of your labor before you get to pluck them off the vine! These pests can cause damage to your cucurbit crops and reduce your yield, so it is important to know what you are up against in order to use the correct treatment. Cucumber beetles: These insects not only cause damage by feeding on gourds, but they also transmit bacterial wilt. The bacteria lives inside of the beetles and is transferred from plant to plant as the beetles search for food. The larvae of these beetles live in the soil and bore into roots and stems where they feed. Cucumber beetles are typically very small and have oval shaped bodies and either spots or stripes. Their antennae are long and thin, and their heads are usually darker than the rest of their bodies. The beetles can be controlled by using fabric row covers, handpicking them off, and eliminating weeds to decrease shelter for them. Two-spotted Spider Mites: Spider mites can be a serious problem during hot, dry weather. They feed on individual cells of the leaves and the damage looks like yellow or brown stippling all over the leaves. Because spider mites are so small, they are hard to detect and can damage plants very quickly. Do not apply insecticides more than necessary in drought conditions because these kill predators of spider mites causing populations and damage to increase. Squash bugs: These bugs are some of the most common pests in home vegetable gardens. They use their needle-like mouthparts to suck the sap out of leaves. This causes plants to wilt and die very quickly. Squash bugs are between one half and three quarters of an inch long. The young bugs are a light gray color, while the adults are brownish black. In the spring, they will emerge and mate, laying their eggs on the undersides of cucurbit leaves. The eggs range in color from yellow to red and hatch about ten days after they are laid. Nymphs become adults in four to six weeks, and only one generation of adults occurs each year. Prevent squash bugs from being a problem next year by discarding and destroying all harvested annual plants. This removes available shelter for the adults.

Squash vine borer: This moth is found all the way from Canada to Argentina and is the most devastating pest to gourds. Though the adults do not feed on the plants, the larvae bore into stems immediately after hatching and damage plants from the inside. In some cases, they have been known to feed on the fruit. Signs of squash vine borer damage are sudden wilting of a vine and sawdust-like waste coming from holes in vines. The larvae look similar to beetle grubs with white bodies and brownish heads, while the adults are a striking moth with black wings and a reddish-orange body. Tilling your garden in the winter will kill any borers left by exposing them to the cold temperatures.

For a publication showing pictures of these pests and detailing effective pesticides, contact your extension office.

**UGA extension**  
**From the Ground Up**  
*Melissa Mattee*



## Letters to The Editor

### Letter to the Editor:

*Volunteers needed to save Warwoman Dell hemlocks*

Millions of very tiny but deadly invasive insects are attacking the beautiful hemlock trees at Warwoman Dell near Clayton, and volunteers are needed to help treat and save them from almost certain death. The nonprofit organization Save Georgia's Hemlocks, in partnership with the U. S. Forest Service, will be conducting a volunteer project on Saturday, July 29 to treat these valuable trees for the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), which has already killed hundreds of thousands of hemlocks across north Georgia.

The treatment process is easy, safe, and highly effective, and all participants will receive a brief initial training. The work day will run from about 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with a break at midday for a picnic lunch. These outings are always rewarding as volunteers get to enjoy a fun day in the woods, meet other good people who care about protecting our environment, and gain the satisfaction of knowing that their efforts will help preserve the beauty and health of our natural resources for years to come.

To volunteer, please contact Kim Wood at kimberlyraewood@gmail.com or 706-455-2313. Please come join the battle against the bugs - you'll be glad you did!

Save Georgia's Hemlocks is a 100% volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization of concerned citizens dedicated to preserving, conserving, and restoring endangered hemlocks through education and charitable service. To learn more, please visit our web site [www.savegeorgiashemlocks.org](http://www.savegeorgiashemlocks.org) or call the Hemlock Help Line SM 706-429-8010.

*Bob Pledger*  
 Vice Chairman  
 Save Georgia's Hemlocks

### 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](mailto: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.*

### From the Desk of:



**Sheriff Clinton of Towns County**

### COPS

Many are aware of the Georgia Sheriffs' Association initiative, which began last legislative session, to address local law enforcement compensation reform. Since that time, Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle has formed a committee of Senators to explore and make recommendations on these concerns. The committee is being referred to COPS, an acronym for Concerns of Police and Sheriffs. Our own Senator John Wilkinson serves on the committee.

During last week's Sheriffs' Conference, I had the opportunity, along with many other sheriffs, to meet with the committee. They were very attentive to the concerns of local law enforcement. Understandably, the growing disparity in pay for local law enforcement compared to their state counterparts was a particular concern. Union County Sheriff Mason addressed the fact that he continues to lose deputies to higher paying jobs, many of those jobs in the private sector. Sheriff Mason referred to having a revolving door of employees that come and go. All the sheriffs agree that this is a growing concern in our state and an issue that needs to be discussed and addressed. I believe that this is a threat to the safety of the public. Local law enforcement officers are the ones that come when someone dials 911. Public safety is an area that we cannot ignore. The primary need of anyone is to be safe. In order to enjoy all those other aspects of life, safety must be established and maintained. It is easily taken for granted when present, but we cannot forget that our public safety falls on the shoulders of the men and women that go to work every day to protect our communities. I, for one, believe that these men and women deserve to be taken care of.

There has been a lot of misunderstanding about the position taken by the Sheriffs last session and I want to be very clear: I applaud Governor Deal for starting the conversation and for taking steps to get our state law enforcement better compensation. I don't believe the conversation should end there and I applaud Lieutenant Governor Cagle for taking the appropriate next step and appointing this committee to look into this issue.

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



## Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
	Every Tuesday:	
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Wednesday	
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Thursday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Friday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Sunday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	First Monday of each month:	
Mtn. Amat. Radio	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
	First Tuesday of each month:	
Alzheimer's Supp.	McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	6 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
	First Wednesday of each month:	
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
	First Thursday of each month:	
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Fourth Monday of each month:	
Red Cross DAT	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
	Fourth Tuesday of each month:	
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
	Fourth Thursday of each month:	
Republican Party	New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
	Last Thursday of each month:	
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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## Towns County Herald

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