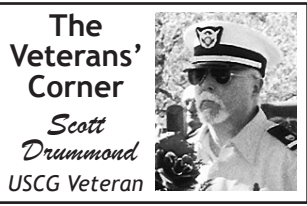


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Navy Day October 27

Thanks to someone we all know and love, retired US Navy CPO, and WW II Iwo Jima Veteran, Clarence "Bud" Johnson, those of us who may not know, now have a chance to learn a tidbit of very important history.



The Veterans' Corner Scott Drummond USCG Veteran

Our US Navy has two Navy wide celebrated days annually. Our Navy's birthday, established by the Continental Congress was 13 October 1775 and, as such is celebrated on 13 October, every year. Navy birthday 13 October is more or less an internal affair to be celebrated by active duty members, Naval Reservists, retirees and dependents.

However, something as important to the security of our United States of America and indeed the freedom of our civilized world deserves at least two days of recognition, wouldn't you think?

Obviously so did the Navy League of the United States, organizing the first Navy Day in 1922. President Theodore Roosevelt's birthday, October 27 was picked, combined with the history of a 1775 report by our Continental Congress recommending the purchase of merchant ships for the foundation of our Navy. President Roosevelt had been an Assistant Secretary of the Navy and no doubt was a strong supporter of our Navy. Therefore Navy Day, 27 October became a day to salute all of the men and women who serve or have ever served in our US Navy.

Our US Navy is the naval warfare branch of our armed forces. Currently listed as the most powerful Navy on our planet, with the world's largest aircraft carrier fleet, ten in service, four in reserve and three under construction. With over 300,000 personnel on duty, and 100,000 in the Naval Reserve, a larger detriment to actual war has never been known. Our Navy also has more than 3,700 aircraft on active duty. There are 272 combat deployable vessels. These numbers were fairly accurate as of September 2015, however under our current administration there may be some variation, thereof.

President Warren Harding wrote: "Thank you for your note which brings assurance of the notable success which seems certain to attend the celebration of Navy Day on Friday, October 27, in commemoration of past and present services of the Navy. From our earliest national beginnings the Navy has always been, and deserved to be, an object of special pride to the American people. Its record is indeed one to inspire such sentiments, and I am very sure that such a commemoration as is planned will be a timely reminder."

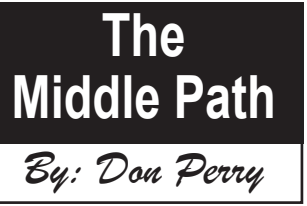
My mentors, since a small toddler have always been WWII vets, as such I am grateful to another South Pacific Navy Veteran who coerced me into joining our US Coast Guard, when I had already applied for service in another branch of our military. May "Pete" rest in peace. Like Bud Johnson he had served alongside our USCG in WWII.

We are blessed to have a few of these wizened older souls still amongst us to assist us in maintaining our true headings.

Semper Paratus

From Politics to Recipes

Early in 2016 I said half jokingly that if the country elected a Clinton or Trump to the White House, I would be forced to start writing recipes instead of political commentary. At the time I really didn't think there was any chance I would have to make good on that promise, but it looks like I've got about two weeks left to learn how to cook.



The Middle Path By: Don Perry

Ideals are incredibly buoyant. They can survive huge, crashing waves of disillusionment and pop back to the surface like a surfboard. But if ideals are not occasionally given a chance to dry out, they run the risk of becoming waterlogged.

Idealism is riding low in the water these days, especially for those of us who grew up inspired by stories of our Founders and the great sacrifices made by our people through civil war and two world wars. Students of history know that there are no saints numbered among our leaders. They are, and always have been, all too human. Dishonesty is also nothing new. Governments have always withheld information from citizens, sometimes for arguably good reasons.

But it seems that every four years now we are reminded of the gradual erosion of integrity in government, which mirrors the relativism and debauchery of our society. Or perhaps it has always been this way, but with new technology, nothing stays hidden for very long.

I believe that Jimmy Carter was the last honest president in a generation, but his integrity did not take root in the toxic ground of Washington and many historians do not view his administration as a successful one. I suppose it depends on how you define "success." The Reagan years saw a resurgence of patriotism in America as we watched the actor become the statesman. The Berlin Wall fell, along with the Soviet Union. But the Iran Contra affair opened a crack in our faith in government, which Bill Clinton blew wide open.

During the Clinton years, a lecherous, dishonest president was impeached for lying under oath. Few would defend his integrity, but many still hark back to the good old days of the Clinton Administration, when the economy was doing so well. The fact that this false prosperity was paid for by trading about \$4 trillion of manufacturing capacity for cheap credit is a gift that keeps on giving.

The pendulum swing of American politics brought George Bush to power, even though Al Gore won the popular vote. Many were disillusioned by "hanging chads" and an election decided in the Supreme Court.

This was all temporarily forgotten in September of 2001 when the nation was attacked on our own soil. The attack opened a Pandora's Box of perpetual war, paranoia and surveillance. Fear gripped the nation, but the country came together to support the victims of the attack and the soldiers sent to punish the attackers. The Bush Administration swiftly retaliated against Bin Laden's supporters in Afghanistan, but the Bush regime was not content to stop there, and they perpetuated a lie about weapons of mass destruction in order to justify the invasion of Iraq.

We continue to track the history of our disillusionment through the Obama Administration. After the trillions of dollars wasted on imperial adventures overseas and with thousands of military and countless civilian casualties under Bush, the nation was ready for "hope" and "change."

Little changed. After posturing as a reformer during the campaign, one of Obama's first acts as president was to bail out the Wall Street bankers who helped get him elected. Eight years later and we are \$20 trillion in debt, though some of that debt was inherited from Bush and all of it was approved by Congress. The nation is angry and divided.

For most of us, our standard of living has declined. That decline has been accelerated by stealth inflation orchestrated by the Fed in its policy of cheap credit and unlimited fiat money, which artificially inflates Wall Street while making everything we need to buy more expensive.

Our Nobel Peace Prize president is now the biggest arms dealer since WWII. We have about the same number of military bases around the world as we did 30 years ago. By direct intervention or through support of dubious allies, we still meddle in the affairs of the world far beyond our borders. We continue to contribute to the ever increasing death toll of foreign combatants and civilians. Drones, missiles and bombs are easier to put out of mind than having our own troops directly involved. Ironically, Obama's definition of "war" is analogous to Bill Clinton's definition of "sex." It is a point lost on the families of the dead and the millions of refugees which threaten to destabilize Europe. Obama takes credit for "rescuing the economy" and creating millions of jobs, but labor participation is at record low levels, and most of the recovery has been in the financial districts of small but heavily populated urban areas poised to elect Hillary Clinton.

Which brings us to the ugliest election in living memory and the two most hated candidates to ever get this close to the White House. The contest, and the anger that divides the nation, goes beyond the loosely fitting labels of "democrat" and "republican." Demographic change is at the root of the conflict. Sixty two percent of us now live in cities. The countryside is older and more Caucasian. The cities are younger and more diverse. Rural areas are more religious while the cities are more secular. It is not a slight to either side to say that while they share many values that make us all American, they differ in the values which decide elections. This is how our elections are now framed, but unfortunately the standard bearers for the two sides of our divided nation may not represent the best interests of either.

Two tablespoons of cinnamon, and two or three egg whites; half a stick of butter, melted...

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Black Walnuts

No doubt many of us are currently hearing the ominous "thuds" of black walnuts falling all around our homes and yards. Though they may seem unsightly when they start to decompose in our yards and provide hazards for our lawnmowers, these nuts can provide a tasty reward to those persistent enough to crack them.



From the Ground Up Melissa Mattee

Black walnut trees are native to our region and have compound leaves, with many leaflets arranged on a main stem. These trees are also considered monoecious, meaning they have both male and female flowers on the same tree. Trees can begin to fruit when they are about five years old, but it often takes ten to twenty years for a tree to put out a full crop. If you have black walnut trees that are less than five years old, make sure they are watered adequately over the summer. As always, it is recommended that a soil sample be taken if the tree has had trouble bearing fruit or if you are planning on transplanting a young tree. This way you can be sure that you are giving your tree adequate nutrition when you fertilize it.

Walnuts will start to drop in late September, but we will see the height of harvest in mid-October to November. The nuts found inside the green and brown husk are highly prized, but processing these is not for the faint of heart! It takes two pounds of unshelled black walnuts to make one cup of useable nutmeat. If you do want to harvest your walnuts, it is important to remove the husk once it is ripe. To determine ripeness, press on the skin of the husk, and if your finger leaves an indentation, the nut is definitely ripe.

It is important to hull, or remove the husk, walnuts because if the husk is left on while they are cured, walnuts will become discolored and have an odd flavor. The dye produced by walnut husks stains clothes, wood, and skin, so take appropriate precautions when hulling the nuts. Applying pressure to the sides of the husk by pounding side to side with a hammer is usually sufficient to knock the husk off a fully mature walnut, but make sure to wear safety glasses. You can also soften the husks by mixing three parts nuts to one part water and a handful of gravel and stirring vigorously. Do not compost the removed husks as they produce a chemical called juglone which can be harmful to other plants.

After you have hulled the walnuts, wash the unshelled nuts. The shells also stain, so wash them outside. A garden hose and a bucket do the trick just fine, and this also helps determine which nuts are good: if they sink, keep them, and if they float, throw them away as they likely have insect damage. Once the nuts are clean and dry, cure them by storing them in a cool, dry place away from sunlight for about two weeks. Nuts are properly cured when the kernel breaks with a crisp snap. You can then store the nuts until you are ready to shell them.

When you are ready to enjoy your walnuts, soak them in hot water the day before prevent the kernels from shattering upon shelling. Nutmeat can be refrigerated for nine months, or frozen for even longer to use at a later date.

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor, Have you seen our new Bell Mountain Park and Historical Site? If you have not, you really, really should. It is spectacular!

Today I took the winding, picturesque drive up to the pinnacle of Bell Mountain and when I arrived at the Park I had the surprise of my life. Admiring the 360 degree views took my breath away. It is literally awe inspiring.

I ask you. How in the world does our Commissioner, Mr. Bill Kendall, work his magic in order to provide we citizens (and visitors) of Towns County, Georgia with such an outstanding attraction as Bell Mountain Park and Historical Site? This is especially impressive when you consider that of the 159 counties in this great state we have the lowest real estate tax rate. This park is just the latest example of how Mr. Kendall has worked on our behalf for many, many years to improve our already beautiful area. He will be missed!

Parents. Please consider explaining to your children that "tagging" the boulders at the summit of Bell Mountain does not add to the attractiveness of the Park.

James Harber

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.

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



"Election years are terrible. Republicans won't give you any candy, and Democrats want to take it away!"

Towns County Community Calendar

Table with community events: Bingo, Bridge Players, Free GED prep, SMART Recovery, etc. with dates and times.

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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