

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

After December 7, 1941

The Veterans' Corner Scott Drummond USCG Veteran



A little history we may have forgotten. And another reason to be thankful for our WWII generation...

After Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, with the United States reeling and wounded, something dramatic was needed to turn the war effort around. Even though there were no friendly airfields close enough to Japan for the United States to launch a retaliation...

The 16 five-man crews, under the command of Lt. Col. James Doolittle, who himself flew the lead plane off the USS Hornet, knew that they would not be able to return to the carrier. These men knew the odds were against them to survive this mission.

They would have to hit Japan and then hope to make it to China for a safe landing. But on the day of the raid, the Japanese military caught wind of the plan. The Raiders were told that they would have to take off from much farther out in the Pacific Ocean than they had counted on.

And those men went anyway. They bombed Tokyo and then flew as far as they could. Four planes crash-landed; 11 more crews bailed out, and three of the Raiders died. Eight more were captured; three were executed.

Another died of starvation in a Japanese prison camp. One crew made it to Russia. The Doolittle Raiders sent a message from the United States to its enemies, and to the rest of the world: We will fight. And, no matter what it takes, we will win.

Of the 80 Raiders, 62 survived the war. As 2013 began, there were five living Raiders; then, in February, Tom Griffin passed away at age 96.

As of Apr 18, 2017 - Lieutenant Richard E. Cole, who served as Jimmy Doolittle's co-pilot, was the only one of the 80 raiders still living, at 101 years old.

There is a lot more to this story than I attempt to pass along here. Our unregulated internet and free public libraries along with our personal interest help to keep the history of our Sovereign Republic alive and well. We all have so much to be thankful for, our WWII generation with God's Helping Hand remains at the top of that list.

Thanks to John Harkins, American Legion Post #23 Commander for passing along this bit of history and evidence of why our men and women in uniform and their families who are willing to sacrifice so much deserve our never ceasing appreciation and honor.

Semper Paratus

From the Desk of: Sheriff Clinton of Towns County



Most of us have family traditions that we enjoy during the Christmas season. Families with small children may spend Christmas Eve baking cookies for Santa or listening to Christmas carols while enjoying eggnog by the fire.

As a small child I remember the anticipation of Christmas being so intense. I was in awe and wonder dreaming about what might be inside all those presents wrapped so nicely under the tree.

For me, even at 49, Christmas is still the most magical time of year. I love Christmas lights and the sounds of Christmas carols everywhere. The world just seems to be a nicer place during the Christmas season.

I love to watch young children open gifts and see their eyes light up with joy. There is no other feeling like the feeling of Christmas. While Christmas is about much more than material possessions, the spirit of Christmas is certainly captured in the joy of a child receiving a gift on Christmas morning.

So, what about the children who are hard fortunate? Imagine the child whose family has fallen on hard times. Do they wake up to just another day of struggling to make ends meet? Imagine if you were a parent who loved your child, but had lost a job because of the poor economy. I doubt that there would be anything much harder than not being able to provide your child, whom you love, the wonder of Christmas morning.

It breaks my heart to think that, as the rest of the world enjoys the most blessed day of the year, some families wake to another day of not having enough. While providing toys for these children isn't going to make the rest of their problems go away, I can't help but believe that, at least for a time, their world becomes a little brighter and things seem a little better than before.

Each year the Sheriff's Office attempts to provide the joy of Christmas gifts for Towns County's less fortunate children. This effort is only made possible by the help of generous people in the community who donate to this cause. Names of children in need are collected and toys are gathered. We try whenever possible to provide at least one item that the child has specifically asked for. The toys are then given to the parents of the child to handle Christmas in their family's tradition. It is all done in such a way as to protect the dignity of the family and allow them to share in the joy that many of us take for granted.

This year has been a tough one for many local families. We are hoping to provide for each child, but we need your help. If you would like to help us with this effort or if you know of a family with children that needs help, please contact your Sheriff's Office at 706-896-4444. I hope that each of you has a blessed and joyous Christmas this year!

Letters to The Editor

Local Weather Reports

Dear Editor, Have you noticed the local weather reports on cable tv no longer shows Hiawassee as the local area but now shows Cleveland? According to the weather channel, a server went down and the provider elected not to replace it thus showing a larger area. Temps and conditions here are often vastly different than in Cleveland! Guess our local cable provider is up to their old tricks again... poor service!

J C Berrong

In farm country there are no strangers

RC&D Frank Riley Executive Director



The news just seems to get worse every day, and the TV news people seem to look for the worst stories that they can find to beat their competition. The News in my time was Walter Cronkite telling us what happened that day, good or bad, and we believed him.

Just when it seems that there are no good people anymore, a story like the following pops up. It was a tragedy with a happy ending and shows the goodness of farm people in this country. It has special meaning since both my boys were in this FFA group in Houston County back in the 90s. This is a copy of an article from Growing Georgia.....

It's during times of trouble and tragedy when ag people are reminded how blessed they are to be part of the biggest circle of friends in the world. Just before Thanksgiving, a tragic barn fire killed 58 project pigs along with all the valuable supplies belonging to members of the Perry, Georgia FFA chapter. It was an unimaginable loss for the youngsters, who had been working hard preparing their animals for February's Georgia Junior National Livestock Show. "When I first got the text that morning, I was devastated," recalls a Perry High junior. "Me along with all my peers had worked extremely hard already and we were all excited about the upcoming show season. I was completely at a loss for words, it didn't seem real."

Every member, including a 12th grader had invested countless hours and effort into training. "First off, I had to build a bond with the pig and allow it to gain trust in me, but at the same time I had my daily work of teaching it to walk and stay beside me, which took time." The realization that it was all gone was incredibly painful, but the 12th grader says, "he knew that God does everything for a reason and it would all work out." He was right. By the afternoon following the fire, a GoFundMe page had popped up and donations began pouring in. Then, just a week later, the teens received even more amazing news. Farmers and producers from southern Georgia, and as far away as Indiana, North Dakota, and Mississippi, would be donating 65 new pigs to the chapter—these were total strangers who saw people in their nationwide "farm community" in need and stepped up to do something about it. "I was down, honestly I didn't want to show," says a 9th grade Perry FFA member. "Their kindness and generosity encouraged me to show again." He wasn't surprised by the outpouring of assistance from his local friends and neighbors. "They have always come through when needed." But he says it was the kindness of strangers nationwide caught him completely off guard. Another 9th grader, who thought of her pig "like her best friend" said she feels blessed and grateful to be a part of a community as generous as hers. "The other day my dad gave me a card from one of his co-workers that had a really sweet note and some money to help out." "I have never met this lady, but she still felt like she could help. The support we have received is amazing and I can't thank anyone enough." Some of the donated pigs have already arrived, others are on their way. And thanks to the amazing kindness of people the teens have never met, the chapter will be able to meet the strict December 3rd deadline to qualify for the big show. As the members begin to work with their new pigs, the flood of help continues. Several construction companies in Middle Georgia have committed to help build a new barn which should be up and running by January.

One group is selling t-shirts to raise money, and businesses from all over Georgia, as well as a North Carolina company, have come forward with donations to replace the students' equipment lost in the fire. They're not doing it for publicity or thanks—they all just want to do something good for others. One of the students says she's confident the whole team can come back from the awful event. "It takes a strong person to go through a tragedy like this, but it takes an even stronger person to come back from it and work even harder. I did put a lot of work into my pig, but I don't think it will take long to get back to that point. We just have to work even harder now."

The FFA students were overwhelmed but heartened by the gestures of kindness, and perhaps there was a bigger life lesson to be learned here than simply "moving on"—that is that people, especially farm people, are at their core, good-hearted. "It gave me a sense of reassurance, the fact that people from all over our nation and community were there for us when we had no clue what our future held." One student said, thanks to the kind of deep generosity one finds among the biggest circle of friends in the world, and the show will go on. Now this is good news that I can listen to!

Frank Riley is Executive Director of the Chatahoochee RC&D Council. www.info.ccrd@gmail.com.

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.

Poinsettia Care

UGA extension From the Ground Up Melissa Mattee



The most popular flowering plant sold in the United States every year is the poinsettia. Though we mostly see these beautiful red, white or pink flowers around the holidays, they can actually make great houseplants year round!

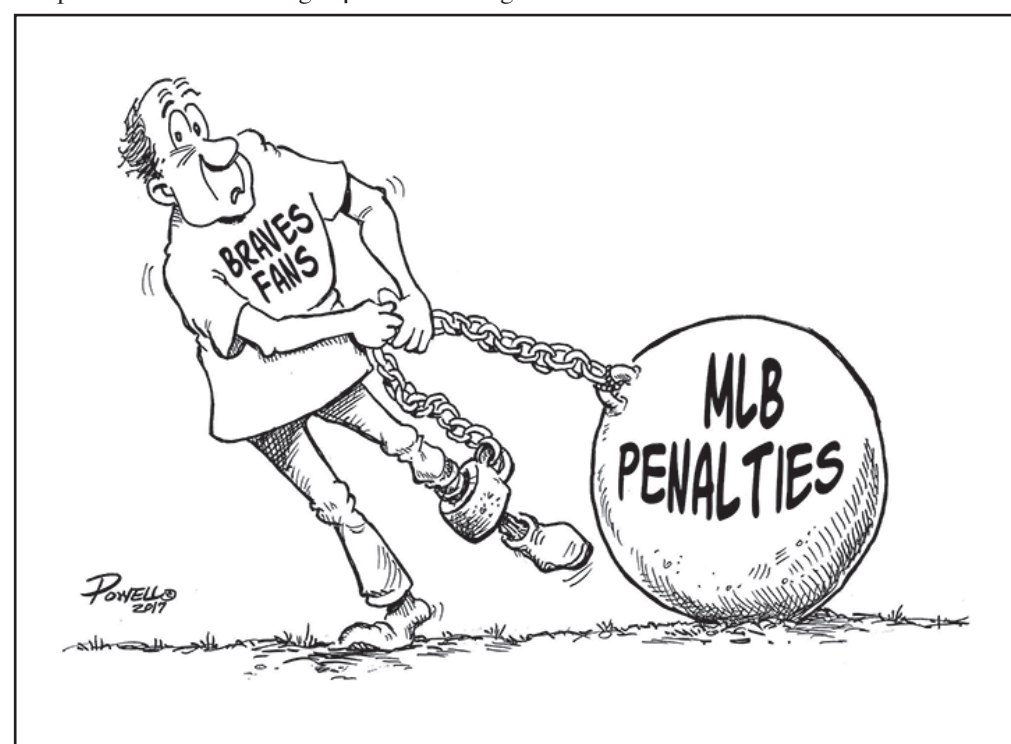
Poinsettias were first introduced in the United States in 1828. Native to Mexico, the original wild poinsettia was much different form the large bush-like decorations we see today. The brightly colored foliage that are often considered flowers are actually brightly colored leaves called bracts. These bracts have evolved their bright coloration to attract pollinators to the true flowers, which are the small yellow bulbs in the center of the stalk. Poinsettias do not have any true petals.

Plants are available in a wide range of colors such as pink, marbled, speckled, yellow and even peach. The most popular, of course, are the red varieties, such as Prestige. If you want to try to keep your poinsettia as a house plant after the holidays, it is important to select a healthy one. Look for plants with fully matured and brightly colored bracts and rich green foliage all the way down the stems. Make sure the plant is balanced with each stalk growing uniformly. Finally, choose poinsettias whose yellow flowers in the center have not quite opened. This will ensure the bright foliage to last through the holidays.

After the holidays, poinsettias can still add beauty to your home. Place your plant in an area that has about six to eight hours of indirect sunlight each day. These plants do not do well in the sun and too much direct sunlight can bleach out their beautiful foliage. Poinsettias are extremely temperature sensitive and should not be placed near drafts or doorways that open outside. Try to avoid placing them near heating vents as well. Poinsettias hate extreme heat just as much as they hate extreme cold. They should never be exposed to temperatures below fifty degrees or above seventy degrees. Make sure the soil is consistently moist. Never let the potting mixture completely dry out, but do not let it sit in standing water either. Never fertilize a poinsettia that is in bloom.

When the bracts fade in March or April, cut the plant back to about eight inches. Keep it near a window with plenty of sunlight and water regularly. Only take the plant outdoors once nighttime temperatures are consistently above fifty degrees. Fertilize the plant about every two or three weeks during spring, summer and fall. A well balanced 10-10-10 mix provides plenty of nutrition. In June, transplant the poinsettia into a pot about two to four inches larger than its original container, depending on how much it has grown. The more organic matter contained in your potting mix, the happier your poinsettia will be!

Getting a poinsettia to reflower is no easy task. These plants have strict light requirements for them to form the yellow flowers and colored bracts. In the first week of October, the plant needs complete darkness for fourteen hours every night. You can move the plant into an area of the house that gets no light, or put a box over it. The plant also needs about six or seven hours of bright sunlight each day. Though this seems demanding, after eight to ten weeks, you should see colored bracts start to grow and the plant will fully come into bloom once again in November and December.



Towns County Community Calendar

Table listing community events such as Bridge Players, Free GED prep, SMART Recovery, Alcoholics Anon., etc. with dates and times.

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$20. Out of County (1 Year) \$30. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. Postmaster: Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Kenneth West Owner/Publisher Charles Duncan Editor Shawn Henrikson Copy Editor Lowell Nicholson Photographer Derek Richards Advertising Director Shawn Jarrard Staff Writer Lily Avery Staff Writer Website: townscountyherald.net