

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Let's All Have a Wonderful 2019

Our men and women in uniform continue to stand guard, do their duty, and sacrifice for our unique Sovereign Republic, our United States of America! Although we may not be aware or even take this for granted, they serve for ALL of us. Let us continue to honor them and respect them in the forthcoming year and forevermore. Here's hoping each and everyone had a wonderful Christmas celebrating the real reason for this season. Rest assured it is singularly because of the sacrifices of those aforementioned men and women that we Americans have these freedoms and holidays. Political blunders aside! Never forget!

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



In that mindset, I'd like to share a verse taken from a 1944 rare edition of a collection of poems and prose written by midshipmen, US Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, published on March 24, 1944. From the hearts, minds, and souls of those whose shadows that many of us served underneath from 1924, 1933, and 1944, to this present day. I was blessed to receive this leather bound extremely rare volume of "Anchors Aweigh", with instructions to share selected verses with our readers. And then one day pass this volume on to another Veteran. I do so proudly and humbly:

Christmas

The windlasses are coated with a sheet of frozen spray
That all the plunging of the bows will never tear away;
The turrets reel and wallow back and forth across the sky,
But a lighthouse in the distance
Shows a cheerful gleaming eye,
To tell us that it's Christmas, To wish us Merry Christmas,
To bid a happy Christmas to our vessel steaming by,
There's snow upon the fo'c'sle, the masts are ghostly white,
And shadows waver drunkenly about the charthouse light;
The goddess of the winter night, somewhere above the sea,
Is strewn jeweled snowflakes from the windward to the lee,
Reminding us of Christmas, Of snowy, windy, Christmas,
That it's white and wintry Christmas
Where the seas are running free,
The smoke is piling up the stack and out into the air,
And all the soot is smothered in the freshness drifting there;
But a green light's on our starboard
And the port is red and gay,
And red and green they're shining out
Across the vessel's way;
Red and green for Christmas, A holly wreath for Christmas,
Like holly for the sailors out at sea on Christmas Day.

Author unknown

May God share His abundant Blessings with all, and let us strive for and pray for a wonderful 2019. God Bless our United States of America and America bless God!
Semper Paratus

A Moment of Clarity

The week between Christmas and New Year's Day can be the most enjoyable time of the year. The kids and the grand kids are still home from school and busy making the holiday memories they will cherish the rest of their lives.

The decorations are still up and the gifts are still new, but the panic is gone, and mom and dad can relax and enjoy a bit of what they worked so hard to put together.

With the new year fast approaching we become reflective, or some semblance of that in our culture which moves so rapidly, skimming over the surface of the events of our time. We made a lot of history this year, but it's hard to see clearly when it's still so close at hand.

All too soon the hyper-connected routines of modern life will return and we will be fully engaged by latest sensations that distract us from the struggle of rolling our stones.

Perhaps now, while our engines idle and our transmission is in park, we can think about what we learned this year. We're going to need those lessons.

Partisanship divided the nation again in 2018, driven by the same old desires for power and the greed which has plagued humanity since the beginning of time.

The lesson we can carry forward is this: Politics is a defective tool for informing our worldview.

We were so angry and positional this year that our moments of clarity were few, but some of us were able to see that belief can function in the brain like an addictive drug, and anything which threatens to deny us our fix can cause turmoil. Those who know this can manipulate; those who do not are vulnerable.

The struggle attempts to resolve itself as a pendulum which swings between social and political extremes, and we rarely pause to consider who keeps winding that clock. We had a rare glimpse of the clock-winders in 2018, and we need to remember that going forward.

We had an opportunity this year to mature as a culture. Many who have been victimized by the powerful were themselves empowered to speak up and to speak truth to that power. The lesson we were given was that the constant parade of celebrity, pounding out the drum beat that urges us to follow, is a parade of flawed humans with clay feet.

We do not have to allow these poor players who strut and fret among the pixels that rule our days and nights to lead us anywhere. They do not represent us. They do not decide our values. They are not the face of our nation, merely a poor reflection.

We would be well advised to enter the new year with this lesson: that the dramas of virtual reality and our unexamined beliefs do not always, or often, represent what is real and true in this world.

Going forward, it would behoove us to remember this also: When anyone, no matter how "trusted" the source may be, begins a conversation with "The liberals" or "the conservatives," are this or that, the quality of the thought which produces that statement is as flawed as the thinking which produces generalizations that begin with "the blacks," or "the Jews" or "the Auburn fans."

Despite our scientific achievements and technological savvy, we have allowed the polluted river of prejudice to escape its traditional boundaries of race and class and national origin and flood the political landscape as well, demonstrating a level of cultural maturity equal to the days when left handed people were accused of witchcraft.

If we are to move forward, we must take these lessons to heart. The author, Jonathan Rauch, provides us a useful guide for the dramas that will be presented in the upcoming year: "A liberal society stands on the proposition that we should all take seriously the idea that we might be wrong. This means we must place no one, including ourselves, beyond the reach of criticism; it means that we must allow people to err, even where the error offends and upsets, as it often will."

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

What Are Invasive Species?

You may have heard of invasive species. It's a pretty hot topic in the agricultural and environmental world these days. For some people invasive species may bring up images of pythons in the Everglades. While we don't have any pythons in the woods around here (and I am very thankful for that) we do have many invasive species that have a drastic impact on our environment and economy. Let's talk about invasive species, how they got here, and what you can do to prevent the spread of invasive species.

Invasive species can be plants, animals, insects, or diseases. We have some of each of those up here. Sometimes invasive species are brought in intentionally with good intent. That is the case with Kudzu. Kudzu was originally brought in by the US government to help provide erosion control. Kudzu can do a very good job of that, but most of the time it goes overboard and takes over entire fields. Asian lady bugs are another example of an invasive that was brought in for a good purpose. Asian lady bugs help control aphid populations in pecan orchards. However, they also decide to spend the winter in people's homes sometimes.

Wild pigs are an invasive species that were originally brought by the European settlers as a food source. Autumn olive was brought over because of the attractive red berries that it has. Japanese knotweed has been popping up here and has been used as an ornamental plant. Empress tree was also brought over as an ornamental plant. The hemlock woolly Adelgid was accidentally brought in to Virginia and has worked its way southward, destroying hemlock trees along its path.

Invasive species can cause a lot of damage to native populations. Sometimes they can wipe out native populations entirely. This is usually because the natural predators that exist in the invasive species' natural home aren't present, giving them free rein. One might think that a solution would be to introduce the predators as well. This is usually not done because of the concern that introducing another invasive species will only make the issue worse in the long run.

Not all non-native species that have been introduced are known for decimating the environment. In fact honey bees were not present in North America until Europeans brought them over. There are other species of bees which are native and are active pollinators, but the honey bee had to be brought over by settlers. Honey bees are usually not thought of as being an evil invasive species, and rightfully so, because of all the benefits that they bring. This just goes to show that not all outside species that are brought in are bad, but we should take great care when bringing in new species because the impact that they will have is largely unknown.

The approach to control an invasive species will vary depending on its habitat, life cycle, and severity of impact. The best control will be early on before the spread becomes extreme. Most of the time pesticides will be required to control an invasive species. There are more invasive species that we have than what I have talked about here. If you need help with invasive species control or identification contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Letters to The Editor

The Christmas Star

Dear Editor,
As we close in on Christmas Day we are reminded of the reason for the season, a season where families and friends gather as one exchanging gifts and love to one another. A season like no other where God brings forth the beauty of this season of winter and snow. Where kids and adults alike enjoy riding down the slopes or hills in their backyard or skiing in a far off resort, enjoying a winter wonderland of fun. In homes across our land Christmas trees are being decorated with glittering lights and ornaments in hopes that old St. Nick will soon be there.

The smell of homemade goodies fill the home with an aroma fit for a king and thus the "Christmas Star" shone brightly on Christmas day over a stable to welcome the little baby, Jesus, lying in a manger on a bed of hay, not in a luxurious palace which He deserved, but lowly and humble, like the servant He would become. That "Christmas Star" led shepherds from the fields who came to see this miracle child, sent from God and even wise men from a far brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. What the people didn't know was this little baby Jesus came to save mankind.

In the book of Psalm 147:4— God flung the stars out in space and He calls them all by name. WOW The One who cares for our brokenness is the same God who not only knows the number of the stars, a number so vast that no human mind could conceive, but has a name for each one.

If God can do this, He can surely send His only begotten Son, baby Jesus to earth for the sole purpose of reconciling every person born back to Himself. The "Christmas Star" was a sign to all that God's only begotten Son, Jesus, had been born and was lying in a manger awaiting His time to proclaim the good news of salvation to all who would come to believe.

This "Christmas Star" represents hope and eternal life with Jesus Christ when life here is over. Grab hold of this "Christmas Star" sent from God to bring you great tidings, comfort and joy forevermore. Amen.

Frank F. Combs

False Equivalence

Dear Editor,
As follow-up to my letter warning how consent for wars of aggression are manufactured in the public by systemic thought control. Another dangerous tendency in the public's perception is when selective quotes are used to support arguments for wars of aggression.

For example, in a recent Letter to the Editor, the writer cited the nation's first president, George Washington, who said: "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace."

By which, Washington did not mean the U.S. should engage in illegal wars of aggression, initiated on false pretexts and including bombing foreign non-combatant civilians, women and children, blown to bits in their own homes—all war crimes.

In fact, George Washington, in his Farewell Address, warned the nation to not engage in "foreign entanglements." The two greatest threats facing the nation, according to Washington, were factionalism, which led to the American Civil War and foreign military adventures. To avoid outside interference, Washington advocated a foreign policy based on neutrality and friendly commercial relations with all.

Ignoring and distorting this nation's greatest leader is to invite tyranny at the top and a psychopathic racist public under the former's control.

Lance G. Jobson

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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"No matter how hectic the holidays, there's still time to make a difference."

Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	Every Thursday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Every Friday: Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alzheimer's Supp.	First Tuesday of each month: 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
Quilting Bee	First Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	First Thursday of each month: Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month: Clubhouse	6 pm
Republican Party	Civic Center	5:30 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
Hiaw. Writers	Fourth Thursday Hiaw. Pk. Comm. Rm.	10:30
Humane Shelter Bd.	Last Thursday of each month: Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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Towns County Herald

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